ASTROLOGY
IN THEORY & PRACTICE

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ASTROLOGY IN THEORY & PRACTICE

Your how-to manual for utilizing the greatest tool you never knew you had

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This book is dedicated to the true practitioners of this timeless Hermetic subject.

INTRODUCTION

What can be said about astrology that hasn't been said before? When you're dealing with a subject that is thousands of years old, there is truly nothing new under the Sun. There are plenty of modern schools of thought that are taking the principles of astrology into somewhat new and unfamiliar territory, but everything comes down to fundamentals. However, what can be addressed are new ways to apply astrology. After all, if one is not putting astrology to work for oneself, then what is the point of learning it?

This book is written as a beginning compendium to help you learn astrology. It is not meant to be a one stop shop like a lot of cookbook astrology texts, but rather it is a working manual, full of exercises and a brief holistic overview of the royal art. I hope you enjoy, and it is my intent that this serves to carry you further into putting astrology to work for you. Be warned though, there are no images in this book. There are other parts of the brain to use other than the visual learning center. So, grab a pencil and a notebook, and away we go! As always, ever discerning….

LVX,

Bill Duvendack

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CHAPTER 1: FOUNDATION

In this chapter, I am going to give a very brief history of astrology, as well as an explanation of *why* it works. I will keep this short because this is not the intention of the book, but I do feel there are a few things that should be considered as a working platform so all of us are on the same page. Let us begin, and we will cover a few thousand years in a few pages.

Roots

No one truly knows the age of astrology. It can be argued that it is the second oldest science on the planet behind agriculture. As long as humanity has taken what could be considered elementary steps into scientific method, humanity has been staring at the night sky asking questions. Let's also address the facts in the case because much has been discovered over the last few decades, and much has been neglected as well in the face of dogmatic history *champions*. Therefore, let's address the facts in the case that can be proven. I share them with the reader so that one can see for themselves. These facts also serve as subjects of interest for those inclined to research, as each point has been written about extensively.

Fact 1: There are cave markings that trace back to 25,000 B.C.E. They cover a rudimentary outline of movements of the luminaries across the sky. Usually, these are accompanied by other pictures and artworks that illustrate principles and messages the artists were trying to convey.

Fact 2: The pyramids in Egypt trace back thousands of years, according to recent scientific research. They are astrologically aligned, even to the point that there are new patterns being found every day with the discovery of new pyramids throughout the world. There are also still patterns being uncovered at the site of the Great Pyramid. The view listed here conflicts with other archaeological findings, though, and thus the time of creation of the pyramids is in dispute. Some sources say the pyramids

date back approximately 4,500, years while other sources claim they are older.

Fact 3: The oldest known sky viewing artifacts we have are the stones that are located at Nabta Playa plateau in southern Egypt. These stones trace the movements of stars, and if liberal interpretations are to be believed, the time it would take to track their movements are thousands of years. In other words, the way the stones interact with what was actually happening in the sky would have transpired over several thousands of years, meaning the movements of those stars would have to have been watched over that same duration! The stones at Nabta Playa date back to 6,400-4,900 B.C.E., even though the movements of the celestial bodies being watched were longer cycles.

Fact 4: Examples of electional astrology, also known as using astrology to check favorable celestial conditions, exists in stone tablets in Sumeria, dating back to approximately 2155-2140 B.C.E. It was also soon after this time that the first horoscope was cast in the same area of the world. Until that time, astrology had only been used to forecast the timing of events, and was not used on a person by person basis as it is now.

Fact 5: The Bhagavad Gita, which is arguably India's main holy book, was written approximately 3000-1500 B.C.E., and it contains veiled astrological references. It is a selection of a larger work known as the Mahabharata, and it focuses on discussions between Arjuna and Lord Krishna.

Fact 6: Stonehenge came into being approximately 3100 B.C.E., and as we all know, is also arranged in alignment with celestial events.

Fact 7: The world's oldest known calendar is located on the wall at Kom Ombos in Egypt, but it only dates back to approximately 200 B.C.E.

So why is all of this important? These are the actual proven facts that have to do with astrology, period. These are the pieces of proof that exist when it comes to validating the longevity of astrology as a working science. By knowing the facts, we can put ourselves in a position to split fact from belief, which also puts us in a position to understand how astrology is both a soft science and a hard science, just like any other science in the world

that ends in –ology. These are not the only facts, though, as more and more evidence is being uncovered all the time and in ever increasing severity. These could easily be seen as the evidence of the use of astrology, and from astrology was born astronomy.

The Metaphysics of Astrology

The study of metaphysics is the study of physics that are currently beyond our understanding, and is thus a very broad and diverse subject. There are many layers to metaphysics and many different perspectives. These cover everything from the twelve laws of karma, and their kith and kin the universal laws, all the way to understanding how to tune one's vibration into the spirit world, which is related to mediumship. The dimension of metaphysics that astrology most visibly interacts with is the branch of metaphysics that is related to interaction with the world around us. It can thus be summarized by what is known as the *butterfly effect*, which teaches us that everything is related, even though we may not be able to physically see it. This knowledge has been passed down through the aeons through mystery schools, and until recently, was secret knowledge. With the rise of occultism over the last 200 years, this information has become more publicized and is now common knowledge for most seekers. From the Emerald Tablets to the Butterfly Effect, science has proven that all things are connected. We will come back to the Emerald Tablet later in this book.

There is also the fact that on a cellular level all of us are composed of stardust, and hence all of us are cosmic with cosmic ties. Once again, this has been proven by science to be true. This is worth noting because it reinforces the potency of astrology. A good perspective is that when one chooses to put astrology to work for them they are tapping into an energy field that is vibrant, alive, and very fluid, yet is also as tangible as any of the four classic elements. For example, we do not know the technical rate at which Mercury vibrates, but we do know that it is fast acting on us because its orbit is so quick, and due to its location. It is amplified by the Sun to a certain extent. Hence speed and vibration are tied together as well. We may know how long it takes for Mercury to go around the Sun. We also know how long it takes for Mercury to revolve on its axis, but as to its actual *vibration*, that is still an unknown quantity. We also know that other planets

such as Uranus or Neptune, affect us in different, usually broader ways because of their distance from us, and how long it takes them to move through space in the same way that Mercury does.

Often time metaphysics is not looked at in the same light as other sciences, but that is a large mistake. To have a category that is more or less a catch-all of observed phenomena that mainstream science cannot explain is a brilliant manifestation of scientific method being imprinted on the collective subconscious of the human species. Over the years, metaphysics has grown and become more refined, making it more technically sound. It has received a huge boost in the last three hundred years or so, ever since the Christian Mysticism movement of the 18th century C.E. Due to this, a clearer understanding is constantly occurring regarding astrology, and thus there are many new dimensions to it that are constantly being addressed. As our collective consciousness is elevated, so, too, is our understanding of our place within the cosmos and our interaction with it.

In the last few years there has been a lot of information that has come to light that further cements the scientific basis for astrology. The first point is the discovery of gravity waves. Early in the twentieth century, Albert Einstein posited the theory of gravity waves, but like many of his ideas, this was put on the shelf for the indefinite future due to scientific culture. However, in 2016, it was discovered that they *do* exist. In short, gravity waves have been detected reaching earth from a distant source deep in space, and it is believed they originated from a major event in deep space. Basically, think of it like ripples in a pond with the gravity waves being the ripples. There are a few major points this reveals to us. The first is the obvious: space/time can ripple when a major event occurs. The second is that our scientific instruments are still being refined and developed, which means that gravity waves are proof that there are many different types of energies out there modern science cannot detect. The third point is that we now know these exist, correct? Well, if these exist, how many other forms of energies that move like waves through space exist? Obviously, I don't know the answer to that, but neither do scientific "authorities." What this means is that we can now view aspects between planets and space bodies in a more scientific way; ironically enough, validated by gravity waves. For example, if Mars is one kind of energy, then Venus would be another, and sometimes they flow together, and sometimes they don't. I emphasize this

here because this is more scientific than the archaic idea that Mars and Venus (to stick with the above example) represent psychological principles, and psychological principles exclusively. As I'm showing in this chapter, the actual verifiable science behind astrology is quickly coming to light the more we move into the age of science known as the Age of Aquarius. Although we are not there yet, we are closer each and every minute of each and every day.

Another piece of scientific information that has been further developed in recent years is that of magnetic ropes emanating out from the Sun to the seven planets of the ancients. In short, these are magnetic tendrils of energy that go out from the Sun to all seven major planets. When they interact with the individual planets, they cause different effects, and the closer a planet is to the Sun, the stronger they are, and the different and more dynamic results can be produced. What also makes this time period interesting is that there was a magnetic rope discovered from the Sun to Saturn. Up until now, they had only been detected through Jupiter, so we now have a rope from the Sun to all of the seven classic planets of the ancients. This discovery dovetails in well with what we were just discussing regarding the gravity waves, because it gives us further proof that there are connections in space between the Sun and planets in the solar system. Another piece of the puzzle this gives us is that it further validates astrological aspects. For example, if Venus is in one place in its orbit and Jupiter is in another, and their ropes are not necessarily harmonizing but rather conflicting, you have a challenging aspect. We will discuss aspects more in depth in chapter 8, but it is enough for now to know they are based in science, not just relegated to psychology, as modern astrology would lead you to believe.

Scientific Method, a Down and Dirty Primer

A brief side trip should be made into the Renaissance to explain why astrology is where it is right now, and how the scientific developments of that time period are still at work today, justifying astrology in a more ubiquitous way. Interestingly enough, what occurred during that time has caused one of the most ambiguous and misunderstood perceptions of astrology. During the time of the Renaissance, it was common for there to be a court astrologer. Queen Elizabeth I had Dr. John Dee, for example.

Astrology was studied in classic and renowned universities all throughout Europe right alongside other prestigious subjects. However, rising in validity was a whole new view of the world that would become modern scientific thought. Too many people see this relationship between the scientific method school of thought and astrology as something that was confrontational or negative, but history paints a whole different picture. Let's look at this from a pragmatic perspective to truly understand what was happening, in order to dispel conjecture.

At that particular moment in time, it became economically unfeasible to have as many subjects available to study at the universities as there were subjects available to be taught. In a classic case of money dictating human development, budget cutting moves were made that started in a few select universities and spread throughout Europe. One of the main subjects on the chopping block that got axed was astrology. This was partially due to the influence of the church, because with the rise of science coinciding with religion, astrology did develop the tint of being superstitious. Yet that very same church worked with their own astrologers behind closed doors. Thus, astrology did not carry forward in universities due to budget cuts. Yes, truth is stranger than fiction, and in this case, more boring.

Besides Dr. John Dee, there were a few other people who contributed to the shift in consciousness that occurred during the Renaissance. Their contributions to science, reason, and logic cannot be emphasized enough! A lot of their processes have been modified through the centuries, but the core ideas they provided have been considered the basis for science ever since they arrived on the scene. It was this influx of natural sciences that caused the universities to be overburdened, which was the breeding ground for the removal of astrology from academia.

Sir Isaac Newton is the first one that comes to mind (25 December 1642 – 20 March 1727). He is most widely known for giving us three laws of motion. His first law of motion is: "*Lex I: Corpus omne perseverare in statu suo quiescendi vel movendi uniformiter in directum, nisi quatenus a viribus impressis cogitur statum illum mutare.*" This translates into English as, "Law I: Every body persists in its state of being at rest or of moving uniformly straight forward, except insofar as it is compelled to change its state by force impressed." In other words, an object at rest will stay at rest

until acted upon by an outside influence. And conversely, an object in motion will continue to stay in motion unless acted upon by an external influence.

His second law is: *"Lex II: Mutationem motus proportionalem esse vi motrici impressae, et fieri secundum lineam rectam qua vis illa imprimitur."* This translates into English as, "Law II: The alteration of motion is ever proportional to the motive force impressed; and is made in the direction of the right line in which that force is impressed." In other words, it takes more influence to move larger objects than it takes to move smaller objects.

Finally, his third law is: "*Lex III: Actioni contrariam semper et æqualem esse reactionem: sive corporum duorum actiones in se mutuo semper esse æquales et in partes contrarias dirigi.*" This translates into English as; "Law III: To every action there is always an equal and opposite reaction, or the forces of two bodies on each other are always equal and are directed in opposite directions." In other words, for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. Interestingly enough, this third law coincides with the laws of karma quite nicely.

Thus, one of the founders of modern scientific thought gave us some of the mechanics that classical science operates on all the time. While elements such as gravity work differently (or, arguably, not at all) in outer space, these principles still do give insight into how the solar system operates on a grand scale. We arrive at this conclusion by remembering the Hermetic axiom, "As Above, So Below, As Within, So Without." One final point with regards to this is there is another theory that Sir Isaac Newton gave us that applies here: the 'Law of Universal Gravitation.' This law simply tells us that two masses in the universe will move towards each other naturally due to gravity, and then, of course, there is a formula to figure it out scientifically, but for the sake of this illustration it is not necessary to know the equation.

Nothing happens in a vacuum, though, and there have been changes to these principles over the years that are necessary to know. I will only list the key ones that support astrology in this text, but for the record, there are many other changes since Newton's time; they are simply more specialized. They may or may not apply to astrology, and they may or may not be

impacting. The ones I've chosen to include here are the ones I have found to be the most useful when understanding astrology. The first of these is *Bode's Law*.

Johann Daniel Titius (January 2, 1729 – December 11, 1796) contributed a formula to previous work done by Charles Bonnet (March 13, 1720 – May 20, 1793) by adding a section to it when he wrote the translation in 1766. What he wrote would later be picked up by Johann Elert Bode (January 19, 1747 – November 23, 1826) in a 2nd edition compendium he was writing on astronomy.

The Titius-Bode Law, or, alternatively known as Bode's Law, is something that is not commonly known about outside the scientific community that uses it. This law is basically a formula that exists, used by astronomers via a mathematical equation to predict where a planet should exist in our solar system. Loosely, this is calculated on the orbits of two surrounding planets. Bode's law is true for every planet in our solar system up to Saturn, and including Ceres and Uranus, but not Neptune, Pluto, or Eris. Interestingly enough, those are the three planets that were discovered the most recently. Some recent scientists have theorized that the reason there have been breaks in the Law is because of the interference of s*pecular reflection*.

Specular reflection is when light emits from a source in a particular direction, and when it contacts the next surface, it *reflects* again in a straight line. Thus, specular reflection may explain why Bode's law hasn't applied to these planets, especially when you put into context the irregularities of the orbits of the planets that it did not predict. Anyway, I digress. Back to Bode's law.

As mentioned above, Bode's law is true of every planet until Saturn, even to the point that it puts a planet between the 4th (Mars) and 5th (Jupiter) planets of the solar system, which is, of course, where the asteroid belt is located! Ceres was discovered in 1801, by application of Bode's law. However, Bode's law is not true of the planets Uranus or Neptune. It is true of Pluto, but it is only true in the case of Pluto due to something interesting. The location of Pluto was predicted in accord with Bode's law, but by the time it was discovered, both Uranus and Neptune had been discovered, so

Pluto's discovery threw the validity of the law into skepticism, which some scientists have clung to throughout the years.

Quite simply, this theory tells us all motion is relative, and time can be removed from the equation. One way a change manifests in scientific thought relates to free fall. When an object is in free-fall, it falls because that is what it would normally do when there are no influences acting upon it. In other words, it's not falling due to gravity, it is simply behaving uninhibitedly. To explain this, Einstein proposed that the space/time continuum is curved instead of linear.

There was a theory in quantum mechanics that addressed Einstein's Theory of Relativity that came from the late 1990's called the *String Theory*, which basically says that electrons and quarks, both found in the center of an atom, are actually one dimensional, not zero dimensional, They exist as a series known as a *string*. The foundational work was done in 1969, and many prominent scientists to this day, including Dr. Hawking, subscribe to it. Through this theory, multiple dimensions are justified. As a matter of fact, this has grown so much that there are five different string theories out there. There is also an offshoot theory to it called the *M-Theory*, which tells us that all five of those String Theories compile into one, which is another dimension, bringing the grand total to eleven. This may seem small to those that are educated in eastern thought, by the way.

Finally, on a separate but related note, in 1992, the *Kuiper Belt* was discovered. It exists around the outer bounds of the solar system, lying just beyond the orbit of Neptune. To understand it, it is wise to think of it as parallel to our inner asteroid belt, with the only exception being its size. It is 20 times larger and much denser. According to astronomers, Pluto and Eris are Kuiper Belt Objects (AKA KBOs).

All of this scientific information is shared above to add to your repertoire when interpreting a chart and understanding it's scientific foundation. Pieces of all these thoughts will be used later in the book to illustrate and explain certain points in astrology. For now it is simply enough to be aware of the legacy the Renaissance has left us.

As is evident by studying all of this, there are many ideas to be aware of when it comes to understanding how astrology works in a very basic and

simple way. The final point to address is what, exactly, modern scientific method is in the modern world. There are four basic steps that it follows. Before I get into the four steps, I would like to point out that to the astute mind this process is very similar to the stages of the alchemical process that has been passed down through the ages. Different terminology, perhaps, and slightly different ideas, but the core essence and objective are the same.

> 1) Use your experience, 2) Form a conjecture, 3) Deduce a prediction from that explanation, and finally, 4) Test. However, this is oftentimes broken down into a more detailed approach.
>
> 1) Define the question, 2) Observe, paying special attention to gathering information and resources, 3) Form a hypothesis that addresses resolution to the question, 4) Test the hypothesis by experimenting and collecting data in a reproducible manner, 5) Analyze said data, 6) Interpret the data and draw conclusions that serve as a starting point for a new hypothesis, 7) Publish results, 8) Retest (frequently done by other scientists). This is the method that is most at work in the world today.

Kepler's Laws of Planetary Motion

While studying the work of Tycho Brahe, the great astronomer, Johannes Kepler was able to extrapolate three scientific laws having to do with how planets move through the solar system and how they relate to one another. The first two laws were announced in 1609 CE, and a third was added in 1618. These became crucial for the work that was done by Sir Isaac Newton decades later, and thus we see that they are underpinnings of scientific thought and procedure. When looked at closely, we see that they really do clarify a lot of *how* and *why* astrology works, so let us pick each one apart for greater understanding.

The first law to address states the planets move around the Sun in elliptical orbits, but the Sun is the main focus. As you may have already suspected, all of this was occurring at a time when there was still a debate

on whether or not everything traveled around the Sun, or if the Sun traveled around us. Simple, yes, I know, but at the time it was revolutionary. Now it has become a known fact that this is the case, just like the well-known fact that the earth is round.

His second law states something a little more complex. Briefly, this law says that a radius vector between any planet and the Sun sweeps out in equal areas in equal lengths of time. Gee, that's not technical or anything, is it? This is basically a fancy way of saying that you can draw an imaginary straight line out from the Sun to the center of any planet that orbits it, and that line is fixed in many ways. Yes, I know there is much more to it than that, but knowing that key point is what is most important for our work.

Finally, the third law tells us something just as technical, but also just as profound, especially when it comes to astrology. This law tells us that if you take different periods of evolution and break them into squares, they are directly proportional to the cubes of their average distance from the Sun. In other words, he's saying that there is a rhythm and mathematical truth that can be found in the orbits of the planets and how they relate to the Sun. In addition, this is a fixed constant. For those of you already familiar with astrology, you can see that he is specifically talking about the aspect known as a *square*, which we will discuss in depth later.

As you can see from this brief view, Kepler basically dissected planets and how they orbit around the Sun and proved there are certain truths to be found there. While these laws are used extensively in astronomy, they also address astrology as well. This makes sense considering that it was only shortly before his work that astrology was ceased to be taught at a university level. Its influence on him shows, and his work on validating astrology is apparent as well.

Alchemy

The ancient subject of alchemy is one that has a very checkered past and yet is simple in its focus. The subject of alchemy dates back centuries and is a very immense body of material. The core text of alchemy is named *The Emerald Tablets*. Part physical and part psychological, this subject encompasses several areas of the occult and metaphysics, and interestingly enough, modern medicine.

At its core, alchemy is the transmutation of lead into gold. Obviously on one hand, this is a physical idea. Given the value of gold over the centuries, it is easy to understand why this idea came to be and why it has been such a long standing idea and goal in the collective subconscious of the human species. This idea is only one facet of alchemy, yet this idea alone has propelled countless people throughout the centuries to experiment and explore this possibility in depth. Usually this is at the risk of their lives and the lives of those closest to them. For various reasons, this was attempted in a trial and error fashion, and as would be expected, not all experiments were successful. More than one alchemist killed himself accidentally through pursuit of this transmutation. The most common cause of death was Mercury poisoning. Mercury is the universal solvent. You can run any other element through it, and Mercury does not take on its properties, nor does it have a major impact on the element that runs through it. The reason Mercury poisoning occurred so frequently is that at the time no one knew about the effects of Mercury on the human body.

Turning lead into gold also acted as a magnet to frauds, and the history of alchemy has more than one person that attempted this scam. Throughout the centuries there have been many instances of a certain type of powder or a particular liquid that could be applied to lead to create gold. Whether or not any of these have been successful is a matter of speculation and debate.

The most enduring dimension of alchemy that exists is that it is process- oriented, and because of this, alchemy can be broken down to several stages and steps that can be used in almost any area of life. I list them here briefly because knowing these stages can be useful when learning about transits, aspects, and interpretations of charts in general. Knowledge of these processes can also be helpful to lay the foundation for understanding scientific thought and method.

As a point of perspective, here are the seven commonly used steps of alchemy. Of course there are many other stages and categories, but these are the steps that most people focus on to put alchemy to work for them in a spiritual way. The seven steps are: 1) *Calcination:* This is the process of bringing things up within ourselves so that they may be addressed. In a metaphorical way, this is the burning away of the dross parts of the

personality self in order to make room for the more golden parts of the spiritual self. 2) *Dissolution:* The first step in this process is to add water. This water is added to the ashes of what was burned in the calcination stage. From a metaphysical perspective, this is the adding of the emotional component, as emotions are brought into the equation. This may manifest in many different ways through an individual. 3) *Separation*: Part of this is where the individual can see the gold of the solar self, as well as the personality self, and perceive them as two separate individuals. There is also a decision brought to the forefront during this stage of the alchemical process which is the decision of discernment. 4) *Conjunction*: In brief, this is the stage of the Hermetic Axiom: That which is below is like that which is above. The second part of this is to perform the miracle of that which is above. In other words, once finding out what one is put here to do, one chooses to do it. Of course, there are no absolutes, and thus, this becomes a sliding scale upon which one simply does their best each and every day. 5) *Fermentation*: This stage is also known as putrefaction or decomposition. This is the rotting away of the dead of what is being left behind. This is the stage in which bonding with the shadow self takes place. This is the alchemical initiation stage. 6) *Distillation*: This is the process of detachment from the physical world. Part of this is to receive divine love from above and understand that detachment does, in some ways, equate to love. 7) *Coagulation*: This is the final stage of the alchemical process. A harmony is created in which the adept can move about between the plane of matter and the plane of plane of spirit. In brief, this is the stage of the phoenix rising from the ashes.

As can be seen, the alchemical processes are still different, but it is easy to see how scientific method came about through the alchemical process. The main difference between the two is that the scientific method lets the facts speak for themselves, whereas alchemy is a more interactive, personal development process. Yes, the two systems can be used in tandem, and they are used in this fashion many times during the life of an individual, and more frequently in the cunning and inventive mind. By looking at both the alchemical and modern scientific perspectives, we put ourselves in a position to understand both facets of astrology: the soft and the science. This will enable critical thinking when it comes to applying astrology to the processes of life that we work to master while in physical form.

Qabalism

Another perspective to consider is how astrology ties into Qabalism. The Qabala is a Jewish system of mysticism that is built around the idea that one cannot look upon the face of God as it is, because it is too vast, and thus the human mind breaks. However, the nature of God can be broken down into various pieces and looked at in a more controlled and methodical fashion. The two main divisions for the sake of our work are known as paths and the sephirah. The paths are straight lines that connect the power pools known as the sephirah. Hence we are given a diagram for contemplating the nature of God. In a lot of ways, the Qabala is a universal filing cabinet for the mind.

It's a natural fit between astrology and Qabalism that is present in the Western Esoteric Tradition, and it is quite potent when applied. Astrological planets correspond to particular Sephiroth on Otz Chim, also known as the tree of life. All Sephirah have a planetary correspondence to it, and thus we can have a more complete understanding when Qabalism is used astrologically. The only Sephiroth that does not have a traditional astrological correspondence to it is the point known as *Kether*, which represents the first swirling of thought. The *Belt of the Stars* is an alternate title for Chokmah, and many consider this to reference the zodiac. Still others believe that this title refers to the fixed stars in the sky, and there is much to consider when pondering the possibilities.

This information is offset by the fact that Saturn corresponds to Binah, and hence through Saturn (discipline, structure, and maturity) one can easily contact the supernals and "cross the abyss," as they say. These two Sephirah sum things up quite bluntly from where I'm viewing them. Discipline, maturity, and a study of astrology can all be powerful tools to assist us in fine tuning our own personal paradigms.

The study of the Qabala can be a very potent adjunct to interpretations of charts, fleshing things out, as it were. By learning the language of the Qabalist, you open yourself up to thinking in new ways, and this bleeds over to how the chart is viewed and interpreted. To a creative astrologer, the sheer amount of symbolism that can be cultivated blending these two can make beautiful scenery.

Why is all of this necessary to know? Astrology is an art and a science, much like magick, and the above information can assist one in applying scientific principles to their astrology interest, paving the way for a deeper application of astrology. Conversely, astrological principles can be applied in many other areas of life as well. If one learns and applies the tips that are mentioned above, they can then gain a great cohesiveness and depth of a chart. Using these techniques also assist in the soft science side of astrology because they help to discipline the mind to think more symbolically.

The final point to note is that to the true astrologer, the psychological scientific approach is the preferred way to handle things. In other words, watch the observable facts, let them speak for themselves, and remain free of attachment to what results are viewed. This is the most logical and scientific approach to take. Too many times some astrologers (mostly hobbyists) look at a chart and mentally project what they expect to find onto the chart, rather than letting the chart speak for itself. It is wiser to simply see the chart, the individual, and the manifestations that have occurred, rather than making what has been read or learned color your view of the chart. Another way to think of it is in letting the chart speak for itself, not looking to find something, but rather observing and analyzing what is found. This is the true essence of the scientific method, and in astrology, we are in a position to work with this more fluidly than other sciences. Thus we have the soft science approach.

CHAPTER 2: SACRED GEOMETRY

Conceptually, astrology has a very simple premise. It's based on a circle. No more, no less. One simple circle can be used to explain astrology. Like the principle of a circle, astrology has no true beginning or end. As we develop as a species we will constantly find new ways of looking at the chart and the interpretation thereof. In this chapter I am going to go over the conceptual geometry that is at the foundation of astrology, and it is also my intent to stimulate the mind into thinking about astrology in new and innovative ways.

Before we look skyward though, let's look at Earth. Our home planet is always our starting point when we use common western astrology. Technically this is called being geocentric. This is just a technical way of saying that we're looking at things from our perspective here on Earth. There are other systems in astrology that look at things from, say, our local star the Sun's perspective. In that case it would be known as heliocentric. On the surface it may look like an odd thought, but we'll explore that later. For right now it is enough to know these ideas exists in astrology. On an interesting side note, did you know that you have an Earth sign in your chart as well as a Sun sign? It's easy to determine your Earth sign, but more on that later. I just wanted to tease you for now.

For the most part, as we understand it, the Earth is round, and it travels on its orbit through space, orbiting the Sun, right? Yep, you guessed it. Any space background you may you learned in your youth comes in very handy throughout your astrological studies. In a major way, basic solar system knowledge is a fundamental that can be relied on to fine tune how you work with astrology. It can save a lot of time when you're learning basic concepts.

Imperfectly Perfect

Everything begins and ends with a circle. It is its own alpha et omega, yet neither of these. A perfect circle is often times used by belief systems globally to represent something that has no beginning nor end. Some would even say it is perfect. Even in astrology the circle is used to represent Spirit itself because it is eternally continuous. In our current consensual paradigm belief structure, we understand the earth to be round, circular, if you will. We all know it's more like a globe, but I think the point is clear.

Exercise #1: On a blank sheet of paper, draw a circle. Use tools, if necessary. Do your best. You want this to be as close to perfect as possible.

The circle can be found virtually everywhere in astrology. It is the basis for most of astrology, too. It isn't that much of a stretch to see why a circle is used in astrology, but it is interesting to note that in the early days of charts they were drawn using a square, rather than a circle. At its essence, a square is a composite of four complimentary 90 degree right angles. Between 90 degree angles and a circle you have all of the shapes that will be used in astrology. A square is simply a different arrangement of four right angles than an equal armed cross. There is one powerful exception to this rule of thumb though, and that is the shape of a triangle. More on that later.

Let's think about that for a minute. A circle is 360 degrees, and a square is 90 degrees. If you divide 360 by 90, you get 4. This means any given circle is comprised of 4 perfect squares. That simple truth is one of the most helpful facts of astrology. Can you divide a 360 degree circle by the number you're currently thinking? If the answer is yes, then you have more than likely discovered what is called an *aspect* in astrology. I'll explain aspects more in depth in Chapter 8, but suffice to know for now that aspects are figured using this process. On the surface this may seem like a lot of math, but it's really not. Anyway, back to point. And back to point means another exercise, so enjoy.

Exercise #2: Split your circle into 4 even sections, using an upright equal armed cross in the middle of the circle. You have just created quadrants, a subtlety in astrology. Use tools if necessary. You want this to be as perfect as possible, but also don't obsess.

But wait, Bill. If you're making the correlation between this and our calendar year, you're off by 5 days. Huh?

Yep, you're right, I am. However, let me explain. The knowledge of this discrepancy has been around for thousands of years, so this isn't something new to the modern world. As far back as Ancient Egypt this has been known. In those times, the five days were known as birthdays of individual Neters; their word for a deity, specifically a force of nature. Each day correlated to a different deity, and they existed outside the circles of time, neither existing in the old calendar year or the new one. They are known as *Epagomenic Days*. It is not known whether or not they knew the modern day scientific principle behind it, but they did notice that something was off. This difference exists because the Earth does not travel around the Sun in a perfect circle, but rather in an ellipse, with the Sun being a sort of weight at one end of it. The Sun moves a degree a day, which rationally makes sense. After all, day follows night, and it's a new day already, and this cycle repeats perpetually. We've now established that the Sun moves a degree a day, and hence we can measure our days through an understanding of how quickly the Sun moves. I realize this is a detail, but it is an important one. The fact that even this obliquity, as it is known, is cyclical tells us that there is a rhythm and pattern to everything in reality. Hence if we paid close attention to the Earth's orbit over an extended period of time, we find that the number of days it takes to go around the Sun is not a constant, but rather a slight variable. Ergo, 365 instead of 360. There is much more to this though, as there is also a wobble in the Earth's orbit to take into account, but I'm going to leave that out of this book. Speculation says this is because there was a collision between Earth and some other body in the solar system millions of years ago, and not only did that cause the wobble in the Earth's orbit, it also caused the axis of the planet to tilt to 23 ½ degrees.

It is important to note, though, that not all the chart points used in astrology move a degree a day. Rather, they have varying degrees of movement. For example, trans-Saturnian planets move at a much slower rate than the personal planets. The Moon even moves several degrees a day! A subtle point that is discovered when one learns how to draw a chart by hand is that planets may be moving slower or faster than average on the day one was born, and this can provide detailed information that can be of use

for greater accuracy when it comes to forecasting. For example, in your chart, Mars might be moving faster than normal, and this faster movement will offset a poor placement. If someone has a slow moving Mars in a poor sign placement, they will manifest Martian traits in a different way than you. Your manifestation would be much more aggressive, while theirs would be more passive. It is also true that this includes aspects made to Mars. If Mars is poorly aspected, a faster moving Mars can offset those to a certain degree as well. A quick look at an ephemeris can give more insight into this in general, but only by learning how to cast a chart by hand can one fully grasp this detail. Also on a final note to this, the rate a planet moves is not consistent, so if you're curious, it is wise to check rather than guess.

I'm also going to briefly touch on retrogradation here because it does tie into degrees. All bodies in the solar system retrograde with the exception of the Sun and the Moon. It has also been argued that they can retrograde, too, but that is a subject for another time. When they retrograde they don't necessarily stop on the spot and turn retrograde. Instead, a lot of times they will hover over a certain degree for a given length of time on their way to retrograde movement until they become full blown retrograde. For the inner and personal planets this usually only lasts a day or so, but for the trans-Saturnian planets this time period can last several days or even up to a week! We will discuss retrogrades more in Chapter 5, but for now just be aware that the time period and degree movement is not necessarily the same across the boards. This rule of thumb is also true when a planet goes direct coming out of retrogradation.

Anyway, back to the topic. And back to the topic means that it's time for another exercise.

<u>Exercise #3:</u> As you're facing your quadrated circle, begin a numbering system starting at the far left of the circle, where the most left point of the equal armed cross intersects with the outer circle. At this intersection, write "0°." Follow the circle, and at the next similar intersection to the right, write "90°." Then proceed to the other two points in the pattern, and at the first intersection, write "180°," and at the remaining point write "90°."

It is important to note here that each point is 180° from its opposite point, and the closest intersections to any given point are 90°. Thus right angles are formed. Esoterically, this tells us there can be sharp angles when it comes to how energy flows, just like energy flows smoothly, as indicated by the circle. Hence we have the blending of matter (right angles) and spirit (the circle). Esoterically the equal armed cross is known as the cross of matter, or the cross of incarnation. To the astute student, you may also see your current drawing looks like the alchemical glyph for the element earth.

Optional Exercise: Draw a straight line between the intersection points of the right angles in the wheel to the outer wheel, and their next closest point. This will create a square within the circle.

Squaring the Circle

In ancient geometry, there is a concept that has survived to the present day, although it has been dormant for almost a century. This idea is called *squaring the circle*. It is not like what we were discussing. The gist of it is this: Using only a straight edge and compass, construct a square with the same area as a circle. Many ancient geometers devoted themselves to this, and in 1882 CE it was declared that it couldn't be done.

Often times the phrase *squaring the circle* has been used to describe something as being impossible. This has been used with great frequency throughout history in esoteric and occult circles in a much different fashion. This term has been used in secret rituals, and has been passed on from one to another. This is not the time nor the place to get into that side of the phrase, but I share this to illustrate how much astrology is intertwined in all areas of the society we inhabit, especially magick and occultism. This also reminds us of the undeniable and important link that tells us if you want to be a true competent astrologer, it would be wise to be well versed in occultism as well. Even if I did get into the esoteric side here, astrology is almost the exact opposite. In astrology, we don't seek to accomplish this goal but rather we work with its opposite. We don't seek to fill the same amount of space between the two, but rather we look at how right angles and squares represent an exchange of energies between two or more points. A circle is a continual line, whereas squares are formed from two right angle lines, and in order for there to be a right angle square, the energy is

not allowed to flow straight. This is an important detail because all energy follows the path of least resistance throughout the cosmos. This is a very valuable lesson when it comes to astrology as well as metaphysics. Discordant energy is a hallmark of aspects that are made of 90° interactions. Notice I didn't say anything bad here, because bad is truly subjective. We'll discuss aspects in depth in Chapter 8, but in order for us to do that, we must first understand the basic division of the astrological circle.

Another facet to the concept of squaring the circle has to do with personal gnosis revealed during spiritual advancement, but this is not the time nor the place for that discussion either. Simply know that there is a psycho-spiritual component to it as well.

At this point we have got our circle divided into four even sections. If you divide 360 by 4, you arrive at 90. That means each quadrant of the wheel is comprised of 90°. If you divide that further, you find out that you can have three sections of 30° each.

Exercise #4: Divide each of the quadrants equally into three sections. Then, at the beginning of the quadrant to the far left of the circle as you view it, number it 0°. Proceed to the next line down and to the right of where you're at, and number it 30°. At the next line, 60°, and so forth, until you've come back around to your starting point, and it is sequential. You can also erase your previous degree markings at this point if you choose. Whether you have both sets of numbers or not is moot. Congratulations! You've just constructed the areas that will be associated with the signs in a little bit.

Of course you can also subdivide the circle by more than what has been discussed here, but the question may currently be "Why this format? Why 3 groups of 30° each?" The answer to this is that the idea of a 10° division goes back thousands of years and has been found to be fair and accurate. Dating back to the ancient Egyptians, the idea of groupings of 10 as they pertain to time- keeping and time-division has been around and in use. Thinking along these lines though, is a good thing to do right now and especially when we get to Chapter 8. At this point, though, your circle is now broken up into what will eventually become associated with signs. You have a 360° circle, divided into four quadrants, which are divided into 3, 30° sub-groupings as well. Hence, each area that will become a house and a

sign is split into 30° sections. Of course there are some caveats to this that we will discuss further, but for right now it is simply worth noting that the natural zodiac and houses are split into 30° sections.

Besides this, it is worth noting that if each sign is 30°, and we've already discussed 90° as being an integral part of astrology, we can see how the two, the circle and the square, come together.

Let's take a moment to talk about these degrees. On the surface, degrees can be a little intimidating. Well, at least they were to me when I was starting astrology. When I saw degrees, my first thought was: "Oh crap! Math! Ugh!" It looked a little too much like geometry for me, and needless to say, that was a big turn off. After I worked with astrology awhile though, I realized there were some subtle points I could use to conveniently break it down. For practical purposes, we can leave off the degree side of things to focus on the basics and come back to that technicality later. The easiest way to think of degrees right now is just a numbering system from 0-30 that can equilaterally break down signs and the circle as a whole. Degrees can also be broken down further by being divided by whatever number you choose. This is an advanced idea though, which we'll discuss later. For now if you feel so inclined, feel free to divide 30 by 3, 5, 6, and 10 if you want, just to understand what we'll be doing with them.

Signs

Each sign, and in the natural zodiac each house, is divided into 30°. Therefore in a sign, you have 0-10, 11-20, and 21-30. These are called decanates of a sign. When you have a chart, you'll notice that planets are located in particular signs at particular degrees. This simply means that at the time the chart was cast for, that particular planet was located at that particular degree in the zodiac. Each year the zodiacal year starts at Spring Equinox, which is zero degrees Aries. Since the Sun moves one degree a day, this tells us that over the course of the year the Sun will come full circle. Don't forget about the five days differential due to the wobble though, which is why things aren't exactly the same ratio. At the completion of the most recent exercise you now have a circle that is split into 30 degrees for each sign as we are discussing here.

It is worth noting that there are three modalities of each element and one sign per modality. We'll get further into this later, but for now simply note that there is a cardinal, fixed, and mutable modality for each element. This was mentioned earlier in the chapter when we laid out the circle and the terms for each house. Hence there are three signs that are associated with any given element; one of each modality. Each sign has a ruling planet or two, and while we'll go more in depth later, for now just understand that means there are three planets associated with each element, to a certain degree. For example, the planets classically associated with the element of fire are Mars, the Sun, and Jupiter. These planets are not mutually exclusive, and you'll notice that some planets rule more than just one sign. In Chapter 6, you'll find more information about the signs and the planets that rule them.

The easiest way to understand the signs and their modalities is that each modality represents a different way for the energy of that element to manifest. For example, the cardinal modality refers to the element when it is forward thinking and progressive, the fixed modality refers to the element in a static state, or status quo, and the mutable modality, also known as the common modality, refers to the element as it adapts and flows, changing in accord with its environment and evolution. A fine detail to note is that the modalities are reflected in the myths that accompany each sign, so if modalities are not clear, you can study the myths that go with the signs. This gives greater insight into what to expect when dealing with the energy of the sign.

Take for example the element of water. The cardinal manifestation of water would be a wave crashing on the beach or the flood of a river. The fixed modality of water would be still, almost stagnant water, and the mutable manifestation of water would be a lazily flowing river on a nice Spring day. This can be extrapolated to each element to understand how the energies may manifest in day to day life.

The modalities are also cyclical. They are always in the same order: cardinal, fixed, then mutable. Not only does this rhythm make it easy to learn the modalities of the signs, but it also makes it easier to learn aspects, which we'll discuss later. Little shortcuts like this can save a lot of time and effort when it comes to initially learning astrology and are very useful

points on down the road. It also makes deductive reasoning a lot easier, too, when it comes to interpreting a chart. Cardinal always starts, followed by fixed, with mutable bringing up the rear.

Exercise #5: On your circle, following the same pattern that you've been using, mark the first division "Angular" on the outside of the wheel, the second "Succedent," and the third, "Cadent." Repeat this pattern all the way around the circle. Also at this point, add in the words, "Cardinal," "Fixed," and "Mutable," to correspond with angular, succedent, and cadent, as listed above. The reason for this will become clear later, but it is just more convenient to add them now rather than come back and do it later. See? I'm saving you work!

Let's take a moment to discuss *angular*, *succedent*, and *cadent*. In short, these terms are not used often, and really they have fallen out of vogue in the last few decades, but they are still powerful concepts to be aware of and use. A lot of this is common sense if you know what the terms mean. An angular house is a house that sits on an angle in the chart. A succedent house is one that follows it, and a cadent house is one that follows a succedent. Thus is the natural zodiac: angular corresponds to cardinal, etc, etc, as I'm sure you can deduce from the given information. However, almost each person's chart is unique, and therefore some angular houses can be fixed, or even on the cusp. There is a fine point to interpretation that can be gleamed from this, but we will come back to that later in the book. Suffice to know for now that while in the natural zodiac angular corresponds to cardinal, and etc, etc. This is not necessarily true when it comes to personal charts. Just because you learn something at the beginning level of astrology as being true doesn't mean it is true when you get further into your studies. While this is a powerful point no matter what you study, it is especially true in this case.

As you can see, opposite divisions are of the same modality, and modalities square each other as well. You'll learn in Chapter 8 how they all interact, but at this point it is worth noting this rhythm exists. Yes, this pattern also applies to our wheel of the year. The equinoxes and the solstices are cardinal in manifestation, and the solar ingresses that occur sequentially after these four pillars follow the same pattern. This also means that each season of the year has a cardinal, fixed, and mutable element to

them. By watching the rhythm of the seasons, it becomes clear *how* these modalities manifest in the physical world around us. For example, as most of us know when a season begins it usually begins with a punch, denoting the cardinal mode. It stabilizes for a while, and as it begins to prepare for the next season, it begins to head that direction, so to speak, and becomes mutable- flowing and giving way to the next season that lies ahead in one fashion or another. We can thus watch the natural world around us to understand the application of modalities in life, which can increase our understanding of interpreting a chart.

Do the modalities tie into degrees? In a minor way, yes, they do. For example, zero degree of a sign is the beginning of that sign, and 29° of a sign is known as a critical degree of that sign. This is called the *Anaretic* degree, and when chart points are located here, it tells us there is a particular cycle of development associated with that sign and planet combination that is being brought to completion during this incarnation.

So if zero degrees of a cardinal sign correlates to the beginning of a season, you can then divide a season in half, and this halfway point is 15° of the fixed sign right in the middle. This is commonly used to find the *cross-quarter* days. In an eight spoke wheel of the year format, you have four major days which correspond to the beginning of seasons. You then have four minor days that are the cross-quarter days that correspond to the perfect middle of that season. While this is a topic for another book and context, it is important to note here because it shows the correlation between astrology and the seasons that many of us enjoy.

For example, if you were looking for the midpoint during the season of Summer, it would be located at 15 degrees Leo, which is located halfway between zero degrees Cancer and zero degrees Libra. This location is approximately early August, and corresponds to the ancient festival of Lammas, a time of harvesting and of celebrating the harvest. Whatever day that degree falls on is the day that is the exact midpoint of the Summer season. That's when it's at its height, so to speak. Before that is a build-up, and after it things begin to shift towards Autumn. While the ancient festivals weren't one-day-only events, they were occurring during these time periods. It is also wise to keep in mind that what we are discussing here is occurring north of the equator. South of the equator is a different

story altogether. Also remember that due to the elliptical orbit of the Earth around the Sun, the day of fifteen degrees of a fixed sign varies from year to year.

South of the equator, this pattern is inverted, so when you have Summer in the northern hemisphere, you have Winter in the southern. This is true of all of the seasons and should be kept in mind when interpreting charts. Far too many astrologers that claim to be competent leave this point out, which is not only rude, it is also sloppy work and disrespectful.

This pattern can be continued through the rest of the zodiacal year. Fifteen degrees of the next fixed sign Scorpio is the time of the ancient festival known as Samhain, and fifteen degrees of the next fixed sign after that is at fifteen Aquarius, which corresponds to Imbolg, also known as Candlemas. To finish the pattern out, fifteen degrees of Taurus gives us the festival of Beltane. All of this fits together into a cohesive system of symmetry and harmony that we can use to navigate the year, and helps us understand how to tap into these energies in a highly productive way. However, this is an astrological text, and I save this information for another time and place more fitting for the wheel of the year.

Other Geometric Shapes

Astrology uses more than just the circle, though, and here we'll discuss what those shapes are and how innovative you can make things if you apply them to astrology. As I hinted at previously, squares are used in astrology, but so are triangles and six pointed stars. You can also find parallelograms in there. While it may be clear from inference, you can also find straight lines and half circles, too! The triangles can be further broken down into two different types. What is the key to understanding all of these, you may ask? Why, degrees, of course! We'll go over these in depth in Chapter 8, but the foundation of all aspects can be found in geometry. As the ancients knew and have said many times, the strongest shape in existence is a triangle. With the rise of the Judeo-Christian paradigm, focus has shifted to the concept of the square as being solid, putting the idea of a triangle secondary, but anyone that has worked with various shapes knows the truth of the matter.

This also opens the door for future work that can be done with astrology. In ancient times, lasting up until a few hundred years ago, there were mainly just five shapes that were used. This changed with the pioneering work of Johannes Kepler in the late 16th century as discussed previously, but his work stands as a testament to the evolving spirit that comes with astrology. He took the classic aspects of astrology from Ptolemy and added depth and detail to them. While his work with aspects will be covered later, it is sufficient for now to understand that he based a lot of his work off of ideas that came from geometric shapes. Since his time, there have been others that have looked at astrology in new ways, and the basis of these mathematical calculations and insights have been geometry.

Let's also clarify here that there is one kind of geometry that is the basis for astrology, and that is Euclidian geometry. Pythagorean Theory also comes into play here, tangentially speaking. As astrology has developed it has not lost its mathematical roots, as anyone that has ever cast a chart by hand can attest. The mathematical and geometric roots of astrology have made it endure the test of time, yet have been flexible enough for adaptation as we as a species have matured. The more we evolve collectively and the more we learn about our world, the more details we discover and the more fine-tuned observations can be made about the world around us. By seeing the world through a much finer lens, we put ourselves in a position to be more careful when it comes to our interaction with the environment and our own evolution. As we discussed in Chapter 1, scientific instruments have come a long way and have been developing rapidly over the last few decades, but they are in no way perfect nor complete. Astrology mirrors this by constantly evolving and adapting to the new paradigm we inhabit. By finding more detailed and subtle nuances in the astrological chart, we become more detail oriented and perceptive when it comes to co-creating the reality around us. We become more efficient masters of our charts, and in so doing, we evolve in a more controlled and focused way. Funny how all of this begins with geometry, isn't it?

CHAPTER 3: THE ASTRONOMY OF ASTROLOGY

Astronomy, which is the newer of the two sciences, is a science that studies the naming and classification of stars and all things celestial. Astrology is how they speak to one another and then by extension to us, but astronomy tells us *what* their names are and other characteristics, such as size, type, etc. Both are powerful sciences and both have their strengths, so it is wise to be familiar and competent with each. It is a fairly new trend in astrology to work with astronomy and due to this, I would like to discuss what this blending entails.

The merging of these two areas of study has only really become commonplace in the last few years or so, so don't be surprised if this is unfamiliar to you. It may seem alien and perhaps a little daunting when it's first being considered for use, but that will quickly fade. There's so much to astronomy just like astrology. With its more hard science focus it may seem like it's a tough nut to crack, but when you break it down to the brass tacks, there are simple starting points. In order to fully integrate the two systems there are some things to note, so let's address them to bring some clarity.

Nomenclature

A first point is that it is wise to be familiar with the terms and concepts used by astronomy even if you don't use them a lot in your own astrology. One of the reasons for being familiar with them is so if you see them used, you'll know their origin. This can help quite a bit to keep things straight in your own mind, and thus weed out what is applicable and what is not. If you can identify something as coming from astronomy rather than astrology, you can decide how to use it in your astrology work, if you decide to use it at all. The way I like to look at it is to liken it to becoming familiar with another language. Astronomy has its own lexicon and when

you become familiar with it, things become a lot easier to digest. If you know, for example, that *dwarf* planets are a concept that comes from astronomy then you can mentally classify that idea in the appropriate file in your brain. Let me give you an example: Pluto. In 2006 the IAU (International Astronomical Union) created the designation dwarf planets due to the fact that more and more small planets are being discovered in our solar system. Thus, as far as planets are concerned, there are two categories that are now being used for planets: planets and dwarf planets. Pluto was changed from a planet to a dwarf planet, which caused quite the global uproar and understandably so. Many people were still alive from when the discovery of Pluto was major news to them, and many also saw this act as sacrilegious. Besides revealing how people feel about their planets and stars, this also made people inaccurately question astrology and astronomy. Many felt that astronomers weren't doing the right thing, and others thought this changed classification affected astrology in some way. Let's look at this a lot closer and clarify what we learned from this event.

The first thing we learned was that the IAU is not afraid to change, clarify, and add classifications as new discoveries are made. I completely agree with this. After all, they name the planets and the stars. They have the technology to discover more and more interesting things about our solar system while approaching things from a highly scientific mindset. To me this is smart on their part. After all, they're doing what they're trained to do, and it's what they do well. By doing this though, they've put pressure on the astrological community to keep up with them. Here again in the long run I think this is a very good thing. You've seen me mention twice now that there is an International Astronomical Union; a veritable coalition of astronomers that work in unison planet wide, and this opens the door to many wide ranging possibilities. Have you heard of any comparable group for astrologers? If so, I'd like to hear about it because I haven't, and between you and me, I see that as a strong, limiting, and outdated detriment to our wonderful art. They can be organized, but we can't? And they're the new kids on the block? That's, well, to me that's sad. But anyway, that's on astrologers as a whole to address. Of course addressing this takes intelligence, maturity, and a list of other things currently lacking in the greater community. There are many reasons for this, but that would require a whole essay or book, so let's get back to topic. The IAU is going to keep

naming and classifying things that have to do with our solar system, so it's in our best interests to keep an eye on what they're doing, and incorporate applicable elements where we can to the best of our abilities.

On the surface this may look like a very daunting task, but it's really not. All we have to do is get through the initial learning curve and then everything becomes easy because being a hard science, they are limited to what they will inject into the study of the immediate solar system. It's not like there are going to be a lot of new ideas that they bring into being until more emphasis is put on expanding beyond our own planet. Seeing as how we're still having ego problems that lead to international incidents and wars, it could be a while. If we take the time to learn their concepts and terms, then we simply pay attention to what happens with them in the future and add new things to our repertoire as they add to theirs. After repeated exposure, their terms will become second nature to us as we seek to develop an understanding of more subtle nuances and manifestations of the stars and planets that influence us moment by moment.

I would like to clarify something here. When I write all of this, I'm not writing it from the perspective of a jaded or disillusioned astrologer. When I was 7 years old, I wanted to become a professional astronomer. I grew up in the country, and would spend many hours outside at night stargazing, using my star finder to locate certain stars and planets, and then I would learn the constellations. This love for all things celestial continued for quite a while until I got older and started giving that profession a serious look. That's when I decided against it, because I learned what it truly means to be an astronomer. Not only should you have a love of the night sky and the stars, but you also had to excel in *gasp* math! I consider myself a math atheist after a comic strip from Calvin and Hobbes, and math has never been a strength of mine until recently, so needless to say when I learned this, I started to feel daunted. At that time (the early 1980s) astronomy was still a small community, and something else I learned that daunted me was the demand for jobs was so low I would basically be waiting for someone to die to get into the job opening left behind, so I would spend most of my adult life not doing what I wanted to do. Needless to say, to a young child that's pretty much a career killer, so I left the world of astronomy behind and pursued other things. I never lost the love of stars, and I always did my best to keep up with all things related to the night sky

and their study. Little did I know at the time that later on in life I would become an astrologer! It's fascinating how life works sometimes! I share all of this because it is my intent to illustrate that above astronomy and astrology I simply love the night sky and all things related to our solar system. This passion is true for many, regardless of whether they are a hobbyist, enthusiast, astronomer, or astrologer. We're all interested in the same subject matter; we just have different areas of focus. So when I write these words, I'm approaching all of this from a holistic perspective. Both sides have their strengths and weaknesses, and only by bringing everyone on the same page can we truly move forward in a way that can best serve our species as a whole.

Basic Tenets

Astronomy excels at classifying things. After all, it is the naming of the stars and all things celestial that is their primary focus. Without astronomy we wouldn't have such a well laid out view of the cosmos as we currently have. We wouldn't have the ideas of dwarf stars, blue stars, red stars, white stars, or supernovas. We also wouldn't have a way to accurately measure distance, or an understanding of what comprises our atmosphere or the atmosphere of other planets that are close to us. In short, there are many wonderful things that astronomy has brought us that the ancients couldn't give us for many reasons. But, you know I'm a pragmatist, so let's talk about what most of this means to the average practicing astrologer. Well, it means nothing, quite bluntly. Seriously. We're the ones that don't look at the curtain; we're the ones that look *behind* the curtain. You can classify anything all you want, but all of the classifications that exist don't really mean anything until you can see the principles at work behind the scenes and understand what it means from a working model. Can you incorporate these ideas into your astrology? Yes, for the most part, and I encourage you to do so. Some things may not incorporate well or easily, but yes, certain elements can be blended in for greater potency and accuracy.

When it comes to astrology, the classifications used by astronomers are really more details than anything else. They can be useful to know, and there is some merit in them, but if you're an astrologer that isn't well versed in astronomy and has no interest in learning it, then don't feel pressured to learn the classifications. While I may encourage it, it is in no way a must to

achieve astrological success, much like learning psychological concepts isn't necessary, either. However, in a book about astrology I do feel it important to address astronomy at least in passing. If you're not interested in this, then please feel free to skip to the next chapter. What I share here is only brief information anyway.

There is so much more to astronomy than what I can adequately convey in this slim volume, so please take these general concepts with a grain of salt, and explore where you feel drawn. The first point to know is that astronomy doesn't just look at the planets in our local solar system, it also looks at different types of space phenomena such as the brightness of stars in the sky, the constellations, black holes, solar winds, and gravitational fields of planets. It also looks at the composition of planets, whether or not there is life beyond earth, and advanced ideas such as quantum physics and different waves of energy, which includes a broad spectrum in and of itself. While not all of these are useful in astrology, some of them are, and in this chapter we will focus on the points of astronomy that are useful in learning the nuances of application for astrology. Some of what astronomy focuses on is not particularly useful in astrology, yet some are highly useful and can provide clarity when it comes to subtleties of interpretation. Let's break down the useful and applicable concepts to get a better understanding of what they are and how to apply them.

The first point to address is solar flares. Basically, solar flares occur when there is a burst of fire and energy that emanate out from the Sun. They are sort of like tendrils that occur at certain intervals. Technically, these are eruptions that come from the surface of the Sun and disrupt a lot of the different types of waves of energy that are commonly used here on earth. For example, a solar flare may disrupt communications if it is of that particular type. Yes, there are different types of solar flares, but really the main variances have to do with the intensity of the individual flares themselves rather than the material involved. Since they emanate out from the Sun the basic composition of all solar flares is essentially the same. As you can see, knowing about solar flares and understanding how they impact life on earth can be quite valuable when it comes to astrology for a few different reasons. The first reason is that they can disrupt radio frequencies here on earth that may conflict with what we see with astrological transits.

Here's an example: Let's say that when you look at transits on any given day, everything looks highly positive and supportive, yet the day goes off the rails as it were. When this occurs, there are two points to note. The first is the fact that the transits may be positive, but the way they interact with individual charts may be highly challenging, and thus there is no true blanket analysis that is accurate. The second point is that the transits and interactions with the planets in the solar system may be positive, but if the solar flare activity is strong enough, it can interfere with life here on earth, causing challenges and upheaval, even though astrology says things should roll along smoothly.

Solar flare activity usually corresponds to sunspot activity and sunspot cycles, and this is important to know because these cycles impact life on earth in a variety of ways. A good rule of thumb is that sunspot activity occurs in approximately a twelve year cycle. You can chart the ups and downs of financial forecasting with this cycle. Generally, the rule of thumb is that if the sunspot and solar flare activity is in a low point in its cycle then the financial industry will be calm, but if solar flare activity is towards the height of the cycle, there may be extreme fluctuations in the financial industry. While I am focusing on the financial industry here, it is safe to extrapolate this out to other areas of society. Sometimes a correlation can be made between solar flare cycles and crime, or solar flares and technological innovation, so it is wise to look at several different sectors of society to see how solar flares and their cycles impact life on earth. Through the years I have found that knowing solar flare cycles and activity can explain some things that astrology can't, and while cynics may say this is proof that astrology doesn't work, it's actually proof that if you exclusively use astrology, you're not always using the proper tool for the appropriate job. However, let's look at another astronomical concept that can be of great use to the astrologer.

This is an idea that is easy to understand in theory, but sometimes hard to understand in practice, and that is the idea of declinations. In essence, declinations have to do with where planets are located in the sky, but this is a different manner than standard astrology and astrological charts. Yes, an astrological chart tells us where the planets, asteroids, etc, are at any given moment, but they don't tell us where they truly are in the sky in regards to earth. For example, when we look at an astrological chart,

we can see that Mars is in Virgo, but that doesn't tell us *where* in the night sky it is, but rather it tells us where Mars is in the chart. In this example, where is Virgo in the sky? Is it in the visible night sky? Is it not visible in the night sky? Is it visible in the northern hemisphere but not in the southern, or vice versa? These are the questions that can be answered by declinations. As you can see, that makes this a subject that deserves a book all to itself, so there's no way I can address it here in its entirety, but I will at least guide you to a basic understanding so you can pursue your own research as you see fit. Declinations tell us where in the sky something is located; above us, below us, not visible to us, etc, etc. Declinations also reveal something else to us, which is a nuance of astrology, and that is whether or not the planets are moving in harmony with each other on this level, which is in addition to aspects, which we will discuss more in Chapter 8.

The concept this addresses is called parallels. The easiest way to work with these is to draw an imaginary line from the equator out into space, and then mentally figure out where the planets in signs are located based off that baseline. If this seems challenging, don't worry, because most computer software programs can do this for you, and information can easily be found on the internet that can help. This is more of a mental exercise than anything else, but it is something that can be very valuable to understand and use. This also ties into an astronomical concept called declinations, but I will table that for now. The planets in signs will either be parallel to each other or not, and if they are not, they are known as being contraparallel to each other. For example, you may have the aforementioned Mars in Virgo above the equator line, but Neptune in Pisces below the equator line. If this is the case, then they could be known as being contraparallel to each other. Parallels and contraparallels are things that can be looked at as strong as aspects in the chart, so dismissing them is unwise. However, they are more of an advanced concept, so tabling them for future study is wise, especially if you feel overwhelmed when first learning astrology. What they reveal are concepts that have to do with how the human mind processes information, the default mental state of the individual when put into context of others, and the ability of the human mind to work with the information it receives. Astrology has worked with these two concepts for a number of years now, and something that has come

to light is that they reflect mental illness in an individual. While there is much research still being done about this, it is worth noting because it shows there are aspects of astronomy that can explain things that standard astrology cannot.

Another astronomical focus that can be useful in astrology is that of the composition of planets. Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune, are the gas planets in the solar system that we know about at this time, and this can be very useful when it comes to interpreting astrological information. I'm not going to take time here to explain what a gas planet is, as it should be clear from the name, but rather let's focus on how to use this information when working with astrology. What this tells us is the effects of the planets may manifest in a highly diffused way. This also has something to do with more scientific ideas that science hasn't discovered yet, such as the type of energy and energy waves they emit as we discussed earlier in the book. While science is able to tell what planets in our solar system are composed of, it has yet to determine the kind of waves emitted by planets of differing compositions. However, as scientific instruments are further developed, this information will come to light.

From a modern perspective, there is another facet of astronomy that has recently moved into astrology, and that has to do with black holes. Yes, I'm serious. This is something I learned about a few years ago and have found very fascinating, but not altogether practical. In short, a lot of black holes that are known have coordinates that can be placed in a birth chart, so you can fairly easily see what black holes fall where. But like I said, I have not found this to be practical. It is my firm belief this is because there's not enough exposure and research currently in existence to do anything with the information. I simply mention this here because it illustrates the further blending between astronomy and astrology and the potential present when it comes to deepening your understanding of both. I feel confident that with time this will be worked with more and more, and that in the not too distant future astrologers can see how chart points blended with black holes can play a role in the understanding of life.

Astronomy has also caused astrology to readdress long standing concepts as well, which is a point that is very important. For example, as discussed earlier, when planets were reclassified, the onus was put on

astrologers to adapt. By and large, the astrological community did adapt. When categorizations of planets changed, astrologers changed their lingo and approach. This was also coupled by the Kuiper belt objects discussed earlier. Another facet of astrology was also covered in this move, and that was the asteroids. Recently some asteroids have been reclassified, and while this doesn't change the application or interpretation of them, it is worth noting because astrologers have been using asteroids for a few hundred years now, so the adjustment is tough for some old soul astrologers. Meanwhile, the classification of Pluto has changed, which caused quite an uproar, but really this change makes sense.

Something that astronomy deals with that astrology has yet to address though, are comets and meteors. Astronomy charts them, classifies them, and studies them, whereas astrology does nothing with them. This is not a slight against astrology, but rather it shows a growth area to be explored now and in the future. Was there a comet near earth when you were born, and if so, how does that impact your life? I realize that due to the fast moving nature of these bodies this may seem irrelevant, but the same could be said of other topics of astrology, so that argument loses its footing fast. This simply illustrates one of the areas for expansion as we move further into the new century and aeon. A tangent on this is the concept of the two moons.

It has been noted for quite some time that at any given moment the earth has two moons around it. This idea is partially illusion, though, but it is important to note when it comes to understanding astrology. Basically, there is the Moon we all know and love, and then there is a captured asteroid that goes around the Earth, often times trailing the Moon across the sky. Some speculation even says this is the root of the children's story of Jack and Jill. However, the second Moon is almost always smaller than the main Moon, and often times it burns up before leaving the atmosphere. This means its astrological influence is temporary at best, and that it generally doesn't survive the experience of being a second moon. Technically and logically there would be an impact on an astrological chart, however fleeting, and if astrologers have been paying attention to the influence of asteroids over the last few hundred years, it stands to reason integrating these would be a natural extension.

Finally, the last two ideas I want to touch on in this brief chapter are very important ones that are wise to work with if you want to integrate astronomy with astrology. The first one has to do with binary star systems, and the second with star clusters. Personally I have only limited experience with binary stars in context of astrology, but I have noticed that if they are worked with more than they are now, there is a lot of profound information that can be revealed. Here are two examples that stimulate the imagination. The first one is the constellation Draco. This is the constellation that circles around the North Pole. At the heart of the constellation is a binary star system comprised of Thuban and Theta Bootis. I won't go into a lot of detail here because I would like to keep this astrologically focused, but there is a lot that can be discovered if you are willing to do the research. The main point I want to drive home is that at approximately 3800 BCE those two stars were at their closest proximity to each other, and occurring in Europe was a technological revolution. Since that point in history the two stars have been moving away from each other, but of course they are still in orbit to each other. They reached their maximum distance away from each other at approximately December 2012, when they began moving back towards each other. Of course a few thousand years in the future they will be close to each other again, most likely coinciding with another advancement for the human species.

The second example I would like to share is that of the twin stars we know today as Sirius. What has been passed down from the Dogon tribe throughout the centuries is that there are two stars that comprise what we know as Sirius. However, Europeans and science in general didn't have the technology to validate this, so their perspectives were not given the weight they deserved, often times relegated to ancient myths and legends. In recent times though, it was discovered that there are two stars that we know as Sirius: Sirius "A" and Sirius "B," thus validating what the Dogon have been saying for thousands of years. This is particularly amazing because the Dogon of Africa are known as primitive people, yet this information shows that they were far more advanced than the Europeans in some ways, even though they didn't embrace technology, society, and other modern comforts like the Europeans developed.

I realize these two concepts can be seen as only tangentially related to astrology, but the situation about Dracos should be clear as to how binary

star systems could be looked at and studied in the context of astrology. One deduction is that you could study binary stars to gain an understanding of greater cycles than the ones that are normally studied in astrology today. The situation of the Dogon is another matter entirely, as it shows there is much to be learned by listening to the stories of the ancients rather than discarding them because we're not in a position to validate them. How did they know there were two stars there, when our modern concept of a telescope wasn't developed for several centuries afterwards? Best case scenario, they had some sort of night viewing equipment we can't fathom, and worst case scenario, well, aliens; but I digress.

Let's turn our attention to star clusters, and here again I would like to focus on two specifically to illustrate a point. I am fully aware there are many other star clusters that could easily be studied, and I encourage you to do so. The first example is that of the Pleiades. In short, the Pleiades is a star cluster that has been known about from ancient times, but in recent decades has experienced a resurgence of interest. There is a rich story stemming from the Greco-Roman pantheon that tells the story of this cluster and the seven sisters it is named for, but what has been worked with in recent decades is something quite different. Recently there has been channeled information that has come from the Pleiades that has risen in popularity, and a lot of this information has to do with healthy and proper relationships, and treating each other in positive particular ways. Setting aside the validity of the information, this is worth being aware of because it shows the cyclical popularity of the unknown. Why Pleiades? Why not the Horsehead Nebula? Time will reveal the truth of the information that has been channeled from this so called location, but I do find it interesting from an astrological perspective because it sits at in the constellation of Taurus, where another interesting point is located. Personally, I don't believe in coincidence, and this placement of Pleiades in addition with the channeled information does make me question it. Perhaps there is something deeper here I am missing, and I will freely admit that, but the fact of the matter is that it is a focal point for the current blending of astronomy, astrology, and modern spirituality.

The second star cluster to look at is the Sagittarius star cluster that is the center of our galaxy. Sagittarius A and B are two stars that sit in the middle of that cluster that have recently risen in popularity as well, and

some speculate that the ancient concept and symbol “Om” can be found within it. Here again, regardless of the truth of that, this is a cluster worth paying attention to because it’s the Galactic Center! Therefore, astrologically speaking, any transits that occur near there, and any astrological activity located in context of it, is highly important to note in the interpretation of the chart because it shows an individual aligned with the very center of our galaxy. Such alignments may or may not have significance, but bluntly, the research hasn’t been done, so for now all we have is a tangent of thought and development for future studies. In the late 1990s and early part of the new aeon, Pluto was transiting the galactic core, and research into history can give us an understanding of how things were at that time, which means we can deduce and infer from there. Being aligned with the galactic core could have personal development significance as much as some sort of physical significance, but it is way too early into the studies to tell. However, there has already been some preliminary research done into this and other astronomical and space phenomena in approximately the last ten years, so if you’re curious it should be no problem finding the information you seek. I would encourage you to use your best discretion when analyzing it, as all that glitters is not gold.

I’m sure it is quite clear by now that there is a lot that astronomy has to offer astrology, and conversely there is a lot astrology can offer astronomy. This reciprocity paves the way for further development regarding space across the boards. Both sciences have a lot of developing to do, but both are getting better and better each year. Eventually this will produce some sort of cohesion, and when that occurs, the development of the human species into outer space will take a next step for humankind.

CHAPTER 4: SOFT SCIENCE

The Soft Science

Every science that has the suffix of -ology is a soft science, which means it is a mix of observation and logical deduction. There are many examples of this in the world today and I will name a few for a point of perspective.

Soft Science	Function
Astrology	The logic of the stars.
Anthropology	The logic of humanity.
Archaeology	The logic of the past of humanity. The logic of the ancient roots of humanity.
Biology	The logic of living beings.
Meteorology	The logic of the weather, particularly the atmosphere and atmospheric events.
Physiology	The logic of the body.
Psychology	The logic of the human mind.
Sociology	The logic of society.

As you can see from the above list there are many sciences based on our understanding of the universe around us and our relationship to it. Astrology exists to assist us in learning our interaction with our local solar system and is based on one simple principle: the interconnectedness of all life that we know. There are several other soft sciences that are not on this list, but most of these are common, so they provide a good starting point for our discussion.

On the Emerald Tablets the classic Hermetic phrase “As Above, So Below” is written and while most of us today know that to be fact, what is also worth taking note of is that only in the last twenty years or so has science proven this to be true, thus validating astrology. Some of the

scientific theories that support this validation are the theories of the *M* theory and the *String* theory, which discuss multiple dimensions, and the *Field* theory, which addresses a one unified field surrounding everything. There is plenty of good material out there that is readily available to all of those curious about more in-depth research. We touched on this in Chapter 1, but there is a wealth of information beyond that to be found by the curious seeker.

As a planet moves it affects us. At first this may seem mind blowing because we are talking about celestial bodies that are millions of miles away. However, keep in mind that we get light from the Sun, which is millions of miles away also. Thus, astrology is one of the oldest branches that comprise metaphysics. The premise of astrology is simple: As those celestial bodies move, they influence all life. The uniqueness of the equation though, is in the way it affects humans. The chart of any given native is a blueprint of that individual's psyche as it enters into its current incarnation. Some charts are almost identical, while others are extreme in one way or another. We'll talk about what would make two almost identical charts turn out completely different in the life of the native later, but for now it is worth noting astrology addresses the imprinting influences of consciousness by the stars at first breath. There are also specialized areas of astrology that look at pre-natal cycles for those that are curious. It is called the *pre-natal epoch*, and much has been written on this for the curious. On a more scientific level, all things are connected as we discussed in Chapter 1, and this is being realized more and more by the intelligent in the scientific community. This helps support astrology in that this information moves astrology out of the realm of dubiousness and restores it to its previous stature of a higher education subject. Yes, during the Renaissance, astrology was taught in places like Oxford, but with the explosion of natural sciences, it got left on the cutting room floor in place of the new and the innovative. I mention this because it means it is on the same level as every other science out there, but not taken as seriously for many factors. Between M theory, String theory, gravity waves, and magnetic ropes, much information is coming into the forefront of mass consciousness that helps explain why astrology works. It's no longer a belief system, but then again, was it ever?

So on one level we have the blueprint of the human and how it relates to the movement of the celestial bodies in space via the aspects of the natal

chart. Following that, we have the interaction of those celestial bodies in accordance with each other. So you may have two planets that are not interacting harmoniously, and those may be different from the imprinting on the native. Then of course is the third dimension to this equation which is the connection between the two. I realize this may seem complex, but give it time and it will be crystal clear. In short, the relationships that are exposed by astrology have to do with a) the celestial bodies being studied in relation to each other, and b) how the native is composed, and c) how this composition relates back to the celestial bodies.

The Hard Science

A hard science is one that is not open to human interpretation. It is worth noting immediately that there is no pure hard science because as long as there are humans that are working with these systems, there will be a human consciousness applied to the subject. The closest subject we have to a true hard science is mathematics. However, there are sciences out there that are more objective than others, and thus they fall into the realm of being hard sciences. A few good examples of hard sciences are mathematics and geometry. Of course most of society is built upon these principles, so they may be invisible to the casual observer, but to the true spiritual seeker, they are the foundations of the current society we inhabit.

One of the reasons that hard sciences are called hard sciences is because they can apply a strict formula to a study and obtain reproducible results, each and every time. Soft sciences also adhere to a formula to obtain results, but there is a little more leniency when it comes to adherence to the formula. Of course all of this falls under the umbrella of 'scientific method,' and here again, much has been written about this line of thinking that originated in strength during the Renaissance of the 16th and 17th centuries in Western Europe with the rise of Dee, Newton, and Copernicus, among others. Some people even say that hard sciences are more valid than soft sciences, but both use scientific method, and both have viable areas of study that can be useful to humanity as a whole in their evolution. In actuality, what we're talking about here are the two sides of the brain, and how they blend together. Both are useful and both are valid, but each one

takes a different perspective to use and apply. Let's look at a list of hard sciences to gain a clearer understanding.

Hard Science	Definition
Mathematics	Manipulating Numbers and working with formulas.
Chemistry	Investigation and study of substances composing matter.
Linguistics	The study of languages, and of language families.
Genetics	Study of hereditary characteristics, and the evolution thereof.
Anatomy	Study of the bodily structure and function of living beings.
Forestry	Study of planting, maintaining, and growing a forest and its ecosystem.

Astrology also uses formulas to produce results, but it is in the observation and interpretation of the information that astrology differs from hard sciences, which is what makes it a soft science. I'll use the following simplistic example to illustrate this. Hard science tells us that a particular chemical reaction will cause results that are consistent each and every time. This is a yes or no situation with no room for variance. The soft science of astrology though, would allow for minor variances as acceptable criteria. For example, let's look at the color red as it is seen by the human eye. If the color was a lighter shade of red that is closer to orange, astrology would say that fits the pattern of acceptable and forecasted results, whereas hard science would not necessarily agree. But as I discussed before, the approach that astrology is taking is consistent with the other soft sciences that exist because it understands the logic behind something rather than the technical manifestation. It requires observing the technical manifestation of something to understand the subject more in depth, which of course is in line with hard scientific thought.

Scientific Method Application

As we discussed in Chapter 1 there is a scientific method of thinking and analysis that goes with science in general, no matter whether it is a soft or hard science. This kind of method can be challenging at first but after time, using it can become second nature and can be summed up in one phrase: "The facts speak for themselves." Preconceived notions are just

about the antithesis of scientific thought. It is highly unwise to go into a situation with preconceived notions, and this is as true for astrology as any other science, particularly soft ones, and really almost every situation you encounter in life. The way I like to use this is to have a vague idea about whatever scenario I find myself in, but I will reserve judgment on making any firm decisions until I have a clearer picture of what's happening. Usually my thoughts are based on very broad generalities. For example, if I'm going to a park, it's safe to infer there will be grass and trees, but past that, it's really kind of up in the air because parks vary from place to place. Once I arrive at the park though, I'll be able to see things as they are right there, and decide for myself what is and what isn't.

At this point it's worth mentioning that a subtle key to effectively using the scientific method is the eastern philosophy of detachment: Detachment from preconceived notions, detachment from expected results and detachment from the personal ego as well. Impartiality is what is being addressed here, and this can be challenging for a lot of people that are emotionally focused and driven. By not letting emotions and preconceived notions cloud our judgments, we put ourselves in a better position to see things clearly, and this is particularly useful when it comes to interpreting an astrological chart and events from an astrological perspective.

Let's take a few moments to look at this when it comes to the chart. There is a pitfall that many might fall into when first working with astrology and that is of rote memorization and regurgitation. This comes from way too many hours spent in formalized schooling during which students are expected to memorize pieces of information as they are presented, and then expected to regurgitate to the instructor what that information is. This is the basis of all standardized tests. In some fields, particularly hard sciences, this is a good thing, but in the area of soft sciences, this isn't beneficial because it closes the mind to possibilities that are well within accepted parameters. Because astrology is so massive and on the surface so fact oriented, it's easy to fall into the pitfall of memorizing correspondences that have to do with astrology. Yes, it is wise to memorize basic information. Yes, this is good material to know. However, knowing the information is only half of the equation. The other half is what you do with the information. To draw a parallel, it's the difference between wisdom and knowledge.

Anyone can memorize astrological information, but not everyone can apply it to whatever may be in front of them. I know plenty of people that are theorists in that they know a lot of astrological information, but horrible at being practitioners because they can't or won't apply what they have learned for various reasons. Usually this reason is because they lack confidence or experience, but sometimes other factors come into play, such as lack of people skills, etc. Whatever the case may be, it is worth noting that if this imbalance isn't addressed, then astrological growth becomes stagnant. Too much theory is stagnant and dead, while too much practice is out of bounds, in a lot of ways.

Interestingly enough, all of this is also why so many people fail at astrology or think that it doesn't work. If someone memorizes astrological material, and there's a slight difference in how it is actually applied, then "by Jove, it doesn't work!" People that think like this are most likely looking for astrology to be a hard science rather than a soft science, and they may or may not be aware of that within themselves. There are people out there that get daunted by astrology for these reasons. This is NOT a science that one can master by simply memorizing information. It takes application and critical thinking. Variances on a theme are acceptable in astrology, just like they are in any of the other soft sciences that were mentioned above. It's only in hard sciences that variances aren't welcome.

Rote Memorization

When I first learned astrology I was very into memorizing as many correspondences as I could to understand the nature of what I was learning. However, after months of doing this, I found that I still felt like I was getting nowhere with it because while I had a grasp on this important information, I was constantly coming up short, when it came to discussing astrology with astrological peers. Even though we all basically knew the same knowledge, they were much more advanced than I was, and not just because of the years of difference in the application of astrology. They had the one thing that I didn't have; the ability to extrapolate from the known information that was common to us all. They were able to do this much better than I for a couple of reasons. The first obvious reason was the difference in years of experience, which is common sense. The second reason though, was because astrology is much more than simply

memorizing correspondences. It also takes the ability to apply these correspondences in a way that is more living, so to speak.

The problem with rote memorization is that if a situation comes up that isn't exactly as was memorized it can be confusing to the beginning astrologer. Let's look at the planet Mars, for example. Mars corresponds to aggression, competition, athleticism, war, conflict, and being proactive. If just this list of correspondences was memorized, a few important points would not be noticed. On the surface, it looks all conflict and testosterone related, but Mars is more than that. When you strip away the above correspondences, it becomes clear that what Mars corresponds to is energy itself, and the application of said energy. Thus Mars also corresponds to vitality, prana, and feeling a connection with the divine, no matter the name you know it by. When the principle behind the correspondences is uncovered, using Mars becomes clearer, and it's easier to extrapolate on the fly if necessary. Because of the fiery nature of Mars, this also means it corresponds to purification through fire.

Let's look at a chart point as an example instead of a planet to illustrate the comprehensiveness of the principle. Let's look at the descendant. Most astrology books and correspondences will tell you that the descendant, which is the sign on the cusp of the 7th house directly opposite the ascendant, gives insight into the type of personal relationships you may have in your life. This also includes your role within them. However, what is not talked about a lot regarding the descendant is something that can be just as valuable when it comes to applying it in everyday life. The sign on the descendant is also indicative of how we like to unwind at night when we're done with the day's responsibilities. In this way it acts as the antithesis to the ascendant, which makes sense because the descendant is the sign that was on the western horizon at the time of birth, so it shows the setting influence. A lot of this part of the descendant is not written about, nor is it widely applied, but by being aware of this principle behind the descendant, we increase our ability to integrate the descendant into interpretations, and we have an easier time extrapolating things we may see that are not common correspondences. To illustrate, if someone has a fixed sign on their descendant, they will generally prefer the same way to unwind each day, rather than private time filled with a lot of activity. Or, if there is a lot of activity, it will be of the same kind and variety most of the time.

However, this also means if someone has a fixed sign as their descendant, and something throws off their behind the scenes time, then they may not be happy, and will probably even show it.

Yes, there is value in memorizing lists of correspondences, but there is also value in learning the principles that are being worked with *behind* the correspondences. Anyone can memorize a list of details, but not everyone has the ability to peer beyond the veil to the principles that are being employed. As you can see from these first few chapters, this is a common theme in astrology. This takes a certain open mindedness as well as the ability to extrapolate, which can take some practice. In short, what I'm discussing here are critical thinking skills, and how important they are when it comes to applying astrology in a living way.

Regurgitation

It never ceases to amaze me how many people that study astrology simply regurgitate what they read in a book somewhere. Then, on top of that, they simply tell the person they're reading for, this material, which in effect, is the same thing as forcing a square peg into a round hole. This can leave the person whose chart is being read feeling like something's not right, which can turn them off of astrology for their entire life, depending on the person. I know this was the case for me when I was younger and still new to astrology. As a matter of fact, it did turn me off of astrology for a few decades. It was only much later when I had restarted my astrological studies that I realized it was the incompetence of the astrologer that influenced me in a not so nice way.

Not everyone is the same, and thus astrological correspondences should not be treated as the same thing across the boards for everyone. People that do this don't understand the difference between hard sciences and soft sciences, and that astrology is a soft science, not a hard science. There's an element of astrology that is not being taken into account by these people, which is the element of free will. We live in a free will zone when we inhabit a body on earth, and because of this we can influence and affect our chart, and in particular how it may manifest in our daily lives. Astrology is more than just facts from a book that are memorized. If you

only know the facts, but can't adapt on the fly, then you're missing half of the beauty and accuracy of astrology.

Let's look at other examples. The first one to consider is that of Jupiter. If you simply memorized correspondences of Jupiter, then you'd know that Jupiter corresponds to good fortune, abundance, prosperity, expansion, and beneficence. Thus, if you saw a positive aspect in someone's chart to Jupiter, these ideas may come to mind first. I can easily see the person sitting across the chart from you frowning as you tell them that they are prosperous and abundant. When asked, their response may be something like "Actually, I'm about to file bankruptcy, and it is tough making ends meet." Well, that would make it look like astrology is wrong in this case, but it's not. When we keep in mind what we mentioned above about knowing the principles *behind* the correspondences, certain esoteric correspondences of Jupiter come to light. The first one that is applicable to this situation is that Jupiter is associated with expansion. Often times, but not always, this can explain why someone is in debt enough for bankruptcy. Said bankruptcy may be an option because too much of life was spent expanding, and not enough attention was placed on more Saturnine correspondences, such as living within one's means. Another perspective to consider is that Jupiter also corresponds to living large and in charge and because of this, the person may not be that good with money, but they may live a very large, rich life overall, being the kind king or queen, as it were. In this case, to simply regurgitate the Jupiter correspondences would be doing an injustice to Jupiter, and it would be making too many assumptions about how this Jupiterian energy may be manifesting in the individual's life. Jupiter is also known as the guru planet and in this way it corresponds to the wise teacher. Not quite the task master that Saturn is, but still a teacher nonetheless.

Here's another example that's not quite as black and white as the previous one. Let's look at the ascendant. The ascendant is the mask that we wear when we're interacting with people outside of our immediate home environment. In other words it's what comes into play more often than not when we're interacting with the world at large. Thus if someone has a Cancer ascendant, correspondences associated with Cancer would be the first words that spring to mind, so a Cancer ascendant could reflect someone who tends to take a nurturing stance towards their environment, or

someone that likes to be nurtured either by their environment or when it comes to getting something from their environment. If this was brought up to someone when their chart was being looked at, it may produce a scowl though, which is something that I've experienced before. The reason for this is that you may come across an individual who has nothing to do with nurturing or sharing these views, yet is still highly Cancerian. A lot of times people see nurturing in a very parental sort of way, but it's more than that. Someone with a Cancer ascendant may be someone that doesn't have a nurturing bone in their body, and these are replaced by the intuition and working out of the home. Yes, these are correspondences of Cancer, but unless the rest of the chart is looked at in context, it is an easy misread if one is not careful. Not every Cancer ascendant is nurturing, or worse, they're nurturing, but for unhealthy reasons. The point I make here is that to a certain extent correspondences, and in particular the interpretation of them, is often times a very fluid process. Some correspondences may apply, whereas others may not, yet when you look at a second chart, the converse may be true, changing everything you believe.

Environmental Context

I realize this may cover a lot of common sense, but it does justify a brief section. There's something to be said for understanding the environment someone comes from when they want their chart interpreted. This environment isn't only the world around them they live in; it is also the genetic environment they have been born into. On the surface it may look like this is an area that is difficult to work with, but when you break it down to the brass tacks, it becomes clear that all you need to work with this is perception skills and knowledge of geography, broadly speaking.

Let's look at a very silly yet real world example. If you were interpreting a chart for someone that lives in a desert environment, such as the southwest part of the United States or the Middle East, if you saw heavy water influence in the chart, this would take on more of an emotional slant rather than physical water. Yes, this is not an absolute rule obviously, but it does bear mentioning here because it is a trap that many fall into. Water is also the element most associated with initiation and mediumship, which tells us this individual may be a seer of some kind, or perhaps this lifetime is one big initiation. Whatever the case may be, it is worth keeping these

points in mind because they reinforce outside the box application of information that is elementary to the study of astrology.

Another example that is not so obvious is the environment of the home and the formative years. Like every part of astrology, there should be no assumptions when it comes to someone's background and how they've grown up. I realize this is a common sense point, but I've seen enough people over the years assume something about how someone grew up based on appearances, body language, etc, that it does bear mentioning here. This also includes their background regarding whether they were raised in a traditional family structure, a blended family, or something else entirely. The easiest way I've found to treat this is to take the person, the chart, and the interpretation all at face value. In other words, when someone sits at the table across from me I treat the situation like it's a blank slate. Here again, I realize this should be common sense, but often times it's not. We come full circle to scientific method here, in that if we approach this like it's a blank slate, we let the facts speak for themselves, which is the application of scientific method. Inferences are another dangerous part of this, and while some things are safe to infer, other things are not. The test of someone's skill is to know the difference between the two.

If all we know about the person is their chart, then all we have to work with is the chart, and the chart can tell us at least 75% of who they are and where they're at, karmically and evolutionarily speaking. We don't need more than the chart in a lot of cases, and if we knew more than the chart, this could actually work against us. For example, I have not found a way for the chart to tell me whether the person is a man or a woman, nor whether they are a brunette or blonde, African, Asian, Caucasian, or any other ethnicity. While, yes, their name may give me clues, nothing should be assumed until you're actually doing the interpretation. This is important to keep in mind because any thoughts we presume can actually work against us either subconsciously or consciously if we're not careful. In all actuality, we really don't need to know any of that anyway, but that's another story. Yes, there are techniques that can determine a guess at biological gender, but that's about as far as it goes, and this should be kept in mind. If you'll notice, a lot of what I'm touching on here has to do with biology. The biological factor should not be glossed over when it comes to interpreting an astrological chart, and this usually works in tandem with the

environmental factors we mentioned above. Thus we really have three parts of the equation: the chart, biology, and environment, both in the formative years and throughout life. In this list, I mean biology to also include the genetic line the individual inherited. That is something else that should be minded when interpreting a chart and meeting with the native.

To summarize the whole chapter, it comes down to two major points. The first point is that it is wise, almost critical, to know scientific method and scientific thought, and how to use it when it comes to astrology. To neglect this point is to do a disservice to the chart you're working on and a disservice to anyone else that may be involved in the interpretation process, such as the native. By working with these principles, the science side of astrology is being honored in a way that keeps it in line with newer soft sciences, like meteorology. Staying detached and objective when looking at a chart and when putting the pieces together is essential to being successful with your astrological work.

The second point to remember is to walk that fine line between using correspondences and limiting yourself to *only* correspondences. Astrology is more than just a list of correspondences. It is a living, breathing body of material that goes back thousands of years, yet is still potent and fluid enough to be adapted to our modern world. While this sets astrology apart from other sciences it also brings it in line with soft sciences. By learning and walking the line between hard fast correspondences and an interpretation that is based on what is seen, we put ourselves in a better position to be more accurate with what we see in the chart and what we share with others when it comes to helping them put it to work in their day to day lives. Anyone can memorize facts, but not everyone can take these facts and turn them into a fluid, living, breathing, organism that is a cosmic view of a noun.

CHAPTER 5: THE PLANETS

In astrology we have our own classification of the planets we use. It doesn't necessarily technically match how astronomers classify planets, but it is an excellent working model for our practical purposes. We're not as stringent with classification as astronomers are with theirs for reasons discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, so there's less to know. From a practical perspective there are only about half a dozen categories for planets in astrology, and in this chapter we'll discuss all of them.

Let's look at these categories and briefly discuss them before we move onto the planets themselves. We should define the term *planet* though, because it means something slightly different, or at least more in depth, than it does in astronomy. The word has Greek roots, and originally meant *wanderer*. This is one of the reasons that in astrology the Sun and the Moon are considered planets, whereas in classifications used by astronomers they are not. The reason they got the term *planet* was because they and the other planets in our solar system were seen as wandering through the heavens against the backdrop of stars that appeared to be fixed into position. We learn two things from this. First, we learn that the ancients knew enough about the sky to know that not all stars move at the same rate, which provided a layering effect in a way, like moving pieces against a backdrop of a stage. Secondly, we learn that they were much more liberal with their understanding because the Sun and Moon were considered planets as well, and when you stick to the etymology of the word, this is made clear. It is also worth noting that after the night sky was studied long enough, the fixed appearance of stars behind the obvious moving ones were discovered to move, too, but at a much slower rate over greater periods of time.

Energetically speaking, planets are known as generators of energy, whereas signs are the patterning of energy. It is through the movement of

the planets through space that we have the harmonic or discordant energetic exchanges between them and us. As they move in geometrical patterns, so, too, are we affected. When we discuss planets, we are discussing where the friction energy comes from that we experience in our individual lives.

Planets are divided in different ways in astrology than they are in astronomy. Through an astrologer's eyes, they are divided more along the lines of their potency and how long it takes them to travel through the zodiac and thus the chart. Some planets move quickly when put into context of the human life while some planets move very slowly. Thus the main point to understand is that the astrological classification system is more in tune with life and how the movements of celestial bodies are, rather than hard scientific data.

The Luminaries

Our inherent masculine and feminine sides

Astrology has been called the psychology of the ancients, and this is an important fact to keep in mind at all times when studying it. To begin with, it is smart to keep in mind that the context of that psychology is the time of the ancients and not necessarily 100% accurate and true now, from an interpretive perspective. Often times, the intermediate student of astrology falls into the subconscious trap of simply memorizing correspondences and regurgitating them, never seeking to think of modern equivalents or variants. Thus, as human consciousness has evolved, so, too, have the correspondences changed to reflect that. I clarify all of this here because there is one psychological principle that is true regardless of era and that principle is the principle of gender. In other words, within each of us, there are two sides that we manifest in different ways throughout our lives. One side is masculine, and the other is feminine. Needless to say I am speaking here in a very neutral way, because there is no right or wrong manifestation of these parts of ourselves in our lives, unless it violates another's will.

These two opposite gender sides of our internal selves correspond to the two brightest lights in the sky, the Sun and the Moon. They are known

as the *Luminaries*, and can give us much insight into the internal gender blend of the individual from an outside perspective, specifically the blend on the psyche. It should be obvious that these two bodies also correspond to the Yin-Yang as well. Thus if one is familiar with the Yin-Yang concept they are already familiar with the idea of the Luminaries. It's simply a switch of terms to put this knowledge to work effectively and easily. Yin is female, and Yang is male, and thus they correspond to the Moon (Yin) and the Sun (Yang).

The implications of these correspondences are also interesting when put into context of the human species. The Sun represents where we are shining our brightest. Its association with masculinity is fascinating to ponder, because the Sun is proactive, while the Moon is reflective. The Sun produces whereas the Moon collects. Yet most people feel both energetics approximately in the same strength, whether conscious of it or not. After all, just like the Sun helps life on Earth grow, the Moon affects the tides as well as many other things on this planet. There have been many studies done throughout the years that tell us the effects of the Moon on life here on Earth as we discussed in Chapter 1. On very base levels, the cycles of the Moon tell us when to plant crops, when to plant certain kinds of crops, and even address our psyches. Some of the studies that come to mind here are the ones that address different facets of civilization. There have been studies done that have shown visits to the emergency room in hospitals, arrests records by police, and trips to the veterinary clinic are all increased during the full Moon. Thus, it has been proven in many different ways that the Moon affects us just as much as the Sun. It is worth the reminder though, that the Moon produces no light of its own, but rather it gathers and reflects light received from the Sun.

There is also a detail I would like to briefly discuss before moving into the planets themselves. Many planets have a musical note they resonate with, and when known, I have included it here with the individual planets. When researching this, I did not find a rhythm or a pattern for *why* particular notes resonate with particular planets, so take this information for what it's worth. And of course, if you can fill in gaps or correct information you see here, please feel free to do so! Also note that musical notes can be converted to hertz.

The Sun

The Sun is our local star. It is approximately 93 million miles from us and gives us all of the energy that perpetuates growth on our planet. Of course in dark places on the planet where the sunlight doesn't reach, life can still be found, but the Sun is responsible for most energy and life here on earth. It is in the younger part of middle age of its life cycle, and will thus most likely be around for quite a while. Considering that our planet is approximately 4 billion years old, that's saying something!

As is commonly known, the planets and other local bodies orbit around the Sun, kept in place by the gravitational pull to it. This is also put into context of the gravitational pull of other planets and nearby celestial bodies as well, and thus the end result is the solar system as it is today. The solar system didn't start out with its current layout, but rather this has come into being over an evolutionary cycle that has been fairly continuous since the beginning. There are many theories regarding the early development of the solar system, but those will be addressed in future books. Suffice to say for now that what we know of the solar system is what we currently know. There are many different theories regarding its origin, but the only fact is that it all came into being around the Sun.

Just like the Sun is central to life here on Earth, working with the Sun in our horoscope can be central to life in our individual paradigms. In astrology, the Sun represents that potential that is to be developed through hard work and discipline. In this regard it is what we are developing within ourselves to maximize spiritual growth during this lifetime. There's a lot of misunderstanding in astrology regarding the role of the Sun. A lot of material out there may tell you that you ARE your Sun sign, but that is assuredly not the case. If we were our Sun sign, then we wouldn't be developing it within ourselves during this lifetime, now would we? Astrology tells us that the Moon is our personality self, and thus represents more of what we do on a daily basis rather than the Sun sign. When we go through the day to day rigmarole, we are living out our Moon sign. This is proven if you've ever read your Sun sign horoscope and it has not fit on any given day. Besides the obvious explanation that perhaps the horoscope wasn't necessarily the best written one, there is also the fact that perhaps you were approaching life at that time from more of a personality

perspective rather than a spiritually oriented perspective. When we choose to personally and spiritually develop, it is our Sun sign that we are choosing to work with; to unleash the potential there that can not only bring us success, but also bring us growth that can propel us forward.

When we research our Sun sign we can get more insight into what exactly it is wise to work on during this lifetime. Thus it acts like a spiritual north star, guiding our soul to maximum growth. In this way, we become the sunflower following it through the sky, seeking light for warmth and growth. The sign that our Sun is in can provide much insight, but that is most effective when we remember that there are no absolutes, and thus what we learn about the Sun in our chart is not mutually exclusive to anything else in our chart. The entire chart is a mosaic; a mandala if you will, and only by studying it in its entirety can you come to the best implementation strategy for positive growth. This is also one of the reasons why no two people are exactly alike. Other than the obvious environmental factors there are the astrological factors as well. The aspects in the chart provide us a glimpse regarding how we can manifest our solar light in the best fashion. For example, if you have a water Sun, but a predominantly air chart, then the approach to take to manifest more solar light is through psychological and mental plane means, whereas if there was more of an earth influence, then it would be through physical plane means and ways.

Another point to consider is that our Sun sign represents our own inner inherent masculinity. Every person has an inner masculine side and an inner feminine side. However, that's about where the commonalities stop, because it manifests differently in almost every person. The masculine side is the side of us that is constantly moving forward and creating and doing instead of being. Of course this is not mutually exclusive, but in a broad sense masculine energy is that of proactivity. In this way it corresponds to our ability to manifest. Now does this mean that manifestation is not possible without our inner Sun? No, it does not mean that at all. It simply means that it is easiest to achieve through our own solar light. Thus by working with our Sun sign we are improving our ability to manifest onto the physical plane. We are also developing what our soul would like to see us develop during this lifetime regarding spiritual lessons. A final correspondence to note is that the Sun resonates with the musical note "E."

The Moon

There have been so many volumes written on the Moon that it seems futile and almost pointless to get into it here. Suffice to say though that the moon has been a focal point of our curiosity and imagination for thousands of years. Next to the Sun this is the body in the solar system that has the biggest, most measurable impact on our planet. We are all familiar with the tides and how the moon affects them, and of course the many studies that have been done over the decades regarding the effect the Moon and her cycles have on the human mind and behavior. This is not restricted to humans though, as there have been many studies that have also proven how the Moon affects animals; in particular, visits to the vet! The short of it is that the Moon has a huge influence on all life on Earth, and because of this it is a factor to pay attention to beyond almost all others.

In the Earthen sky, there are two celestial objects that command attention. During the day it is the Sun and during the night it is the Moon. It matters not their size or particulars, because with enough attention it is quickly discovered how integral each is to what we would consider normal cycles here on Earth. They are important and because of this, astrology considers both to constitute the luminaries; the inherent parts of ourselves. It's interesting to note at this point that there is a subtlety here that is oftentimes overlooked, and that is that we *are* our luminaries. They are what is left if we take away any external interaction. For example, when we are by ourselves, we are acting out our luminaries. As stated above, they are our masculine and feminine sides, and we have to be careful not to fall into stereotypical thinking when we ponder this point. The point to be mindful of here is that of masculine and feminine, versus male and female.

I emphasize this point because of the varied gender identifications that exist in the world today. Each of us has a masculine and feminine side, but the way in which we identify with those sides are as varied as the types of people that exist in the world today. This is a subtle point that not all astrologers take into account when looking at a chart, and in some ways this is a gross injustice to a large segment of the population, particularly here in the United States. This also leads us to another point that is worth mentioning, which is that there is no way to identify the gender of a person by simply looking at a chart. Rather, I should say that if there is a way to do

so, I have not discovered it. The closest you get to this is a technique that is used as part of the prenatal Epoch, but I don't want to get into that here because it is an advanced concept to cover later in greater detail. In any event it is wise to keep these points in mind when looking at a chart. Gender identification cannot, in my experience, be spotted in a chart, but by being sensitive to this detail, we can open up astrology to the modern world. No matter the gender identification of the native, there is a masculine and feminine side to the individual that is clarified by studying the luminaries. Individual approaches to these two sides are things that can be quantified and studied, and even applied to greater astrology as a whole. Anyway, back to the Moon and her attributes.

The Moon is reflective. Without the Sun, the Moon produces no light of its own. Throughout history the Moon has been identified with many things, ranging from the intuition to things happening sub rosa, as it were. The Moon is our intuition and our receptiveness. It is that part of us that is open to interpreting impulses from our external environment. It is not as proactive as the Sun is, but rather it is reactive in that it takes the information it is given and creates a course of action that seems the most intuitively sound. The Moon also correlates to our energetic sensitivity and our day to day disposition. An easy way to understand this is to contemplate the fact that a lot of times we move through life subconsciously, on autopilot. Hence the Moon is more of our day to day selves rather than the Sun. In Vedic astrology, which is astrology that comes out of India and is also known as Jyotish, when we are asked what our sign is, we respond with our Moon sign rather than our Sun sign. This conflicts rather strongly with our western view of reading Sun sign horoscopes and research. Pondering this line of thought can produce many deeper understandings of astrology.

When this is extrapolated it tells us there is a great deal of emphasis placed on transits of the Moon because these transits impact us on a more visceral level. Solar transits affect our growth, while lunar transits affect our day to day being and experiences. By studying our Moon sign, we can see the day to day things we face and how to approach them in an empowering way. In a lot of ways this touches on one of the most, if not the most powerful, method of learning that exists, and that is learning through repetition. If we're facing something on a monthly basis, we get more

exposure to it and hence we have ingrained healthy patterns in a faster way. Solar transit patterns only occur at certain times of the year, allowing us to adopt a weather-the-storm type of mentality, which does almost nothing for our individual development. On the other hand, lunar transits occur each month and are more potent in manifestation.

I won't get into more detail on the Moon here due to the numerous volumes written on her as previously mentioned. For the curious seeker though, many valuable tomes can be found that can give greater insight into correspondences of the Moon and ways to work with her on a more practical level. A final correspondence to note is that the Moon resonates with the musical note "Ab." (A Flat)

The Inner Planets

The inner planets also constitute part of the personal planets due to the fact that they are the ones that we feel on a very personal level. We can chart their cycles to the cycles of our lives, and hence they are easier to pay attention to rather than trans-personal planetary cycles. The two planets that command our attention are Mercury and Venus because they exist between us and the Sun; between us and the luminaries. Hence these are planets that we *feel*, intimately. These two planets are known as the inner planets. Mercury corresponds to communication and Venus corresponds to our ability to create. We'll discuss them more shortly, but for now these characteristics stand to illustrate just how intimate they can be. After all, as soon as we're interacting with something outside of ourselves, we are having an intimate interaction with something else. These situations pull our heartstrings in ways they cannot otherwise be pulled. These are also planets that have such rapid transit cycles that they generally happen very frequently, and this makes them easier to work with if we're alert to what's happening.

Mercury

Mercury is the planet closest to the Sun. It zips around the Sun over the course of 88 days, which means that we can easily pay attention to it. It corresponds to personal communications and adaptability. On an esoteric level this could be seen as alchemy, and in another light it represents our ability to change lemons into lemon juice. Mercury is thus a planet that we

work with all of the time; to the degree that we may not always be conscious of it. This is also why retrograde periods of Mercury may hit us harder than other retrograde cycles. In Chapter 5 we will discuss what retrograde is, and it will become clear why those cycles are so intense. For now though, it is simply worth noting the distance between the Sun and Mercury and the fact that Mercury lies between us and the Sun. These are two very strong reasons why Mercury retrograde cycles are so impacting. Mercury is also considered gender neutral.

Outside of astrological circles, Mercury, and specifically Mercury retrograde cycles, are probably the most talked about facet of modern astrology. Needless to say, there have been volumes written on it, so I won't discuss it in full depth here. However, I will say that for those that want to establish an intimate relationship with Mercury, there is plenty out there to feed that desire. A final correspondence to note is that Mercury resonates with the musical note "C#." (C Sharp)

Venus

Venus is actually a very complex planet to understand and potentially the most powerful outside of the luminaries. It is said the ancients viewed a trail, commonly speculated as dust, following Venus across the sky. This was known as a beard or a tail, and hence an old title of Venus was "the bearded one." Her appearance at sunrise and sunset in an alternating fashion also gave rise to some of the earliest stories having to do with the "light bringer" when she was visible near dawn. Some theorists speculate that the concept of the light bringer, particularly how it refers to the persona of Lucifer, is actually a veiled attempt at the demonization of the goddess by later oppressive solar-phallic belief systems. However, I digress. That is a subject for another book.

Venus corresponds to love, art, beauty, money, and all things related. However, Venus also corresponds to the appreciation of all those things. She also corresponds to goddess energy, and by working with her we can unleash our inner goddess energy. In astrology she is known as the *Lesser Benefic* because she is the second most beneficial planet to look at and to integrate.

The correspondence of money is an interesting correspondence and one that isn't talked about extensively. We're talking money here; the coin of the realm. I emphasize this because we're not talking about prosperity or abundance, but rather the physical money that we use to get us where we want to go. If money is to be understood as a physical representation of the exchange of energy, then we can infer that the way money corresponds to Venus is how we get value for what we have created. What we have created is based on where our love of art and beauty lie. This makes Venus earthier than other planets we'll discuss later, because one of her subtle correspondences becomes physical results for our passions and interests. In this way she is grounding, and grounded. Hence we can chart our progress with Venus in a very measurable way. This isn't a mutually exclusive thought though, and it is wise to keep that in mind as we go through future planets. Yes, she is the goddess, but she is the physical goddess we see and is not perhaps the spirit of the goddess that lives in and moves through physical form. Those correspondences belong elsewhere, located later in this chapter. A final correspondence to note is that Venus resonates with the musical note "A."

The Rest of the Personal Planets

Mars

Often times Mars gets a bad reputation in astrology. Too often the challenging correspondences of Mars are highlighted rather than the positive ones. This is evidenced by the fact that Mars carries the name of the *Lesser Malefic*. Mars corresponds to a lot of things in astrology, and they all have one thing in common when you get down to the core of it all: energy.

Yes, Mars at its essence corresponds to energy, and because of this it also corresponds to how energy is used. Let's look at the correspondences of Mars for further clarity. Mars corresponds to activity, aggressive tendencies, athleticism, conflict, competitiveness, competition, vitality, and war. He also corresponds to the masculine energetic, particularly when it comes to a more youthful expression of it, standing in contrast to the Sun. To borrow a metaphor from Joseph Campbell's material, this is the warrior

stage of masculine development and not the father or sage level of development. Often times Mars is also seen as impulsive, whether it is acted on or not.

An easy way to understand Mars is to think of it using the eastern tradition idea of *prana*. Prana is the essence of life. It is the energy of life itself that is carried on the wind and on the rays of the Sun. We absorb prana through exposing ourselves to sunlight. To the health conscious this also means, in some measure, in order to work with Mars it would be wise to work with vitamin D. This is my observation though, and of course the proper medical professionals should be consulted if one is thinking about addressing this. When we consider Mars in the context of prana though, we can gain a greater ability to control the energy that is evidenced by the house and sign placement of him. Mars is also associated with the element of fire, and hence it is an active planet. Whereas Mercury is air and Venus is water, Mars is fire, rounding out the planets up to this point. The element of earth will come up later to round out the traditional four element system and interestingly enough it shows up last. That is of course, if you don't count the physical earth that we all inhabit. A final correspondence to note is that Mars resonates with the musical note "D."

Jupiter

While Venus is known as the *Lesser Benefic* in astrology, Jupiter is known as the *Greater Benefic*, and this serves as an excellent starting point to work with when understanding the energy of Jupiter. Jupiter is the most beneficial planet there is in astrology. When you want to understand your fortune, Jupiter is the planet to look at first. Jupiter corresponds to fortune (both financial and etheric) prosperity (as opposed to money) expansion, living large, spirituality (as opposed to religion), being in charge, and all things related to rulership. An easy image to visualize with Jupiter is that of a ruler of a kingdom. On a quick side note, Jupiter is also the planet that is least affected by retrograde motion, but that is a discussion for another time. To follow the Joseph Campbell metaphor through, Jupiter is the father aspect.

Jupiter is also one of the two social planets. Jupiter and Saturn are considered social planets in astrology due to the fact that they give us

insight into how we relate to society in general. This also extends to how society makes us feel, too. While the other planets we've discussed thus far give us insight into one on one interactions, it is these two planets that can give us insight into how we interact with groups of people. The tricky thing about Jupiter, though, is that it is a gas giant, so sometimes it can be etheric rather than physical. The metaphor I like to use is that sometimes it can be considered like a balloon. If you work with Jupiterian energy too much you're adding thoughts which correspond to air to it, and thus you are continually feeding it. This can be too much of a good thing though, and as we all know, if we're not careful we can spend too much time in our heads and not enough time interacting with the physical world. On a darker note, there have been many stories of people that intellectualized things to the degree that they saw physically incarnated life as pointless, or they developed another form of psychoses that affected them in a challenging fashion, and consequently madness may have taken hold. Jupiter is the ever expanding principle, while his social counterpart Saturn is the ever contracting principle. A final correspondence to note is that Jupiter resonates with the musical note "F#." (F Sharp)

Saturn

Like Mars, Saturn often gets a bad reputation to the degree that one of his nicknames is the "Greater Malefic." A lot of Saturnian correspondences can be tied into the view that the Abrahamic faiths have towards the devil. To follow the Joseph Campbell metaphor through, Saturn is the sage aspect of the masculine trinity. Elementally Saturn corresponds to earth, and this is very apropos since it is also the personal planet that has the longest cycle.

Oftentimes Saturn gets a bad reputation due to heavy emphasis on some of his correspondences, but rest assured there are many others that are just as beneficial as the challenging ones. The challenging correspondences are mortality, lessons, being forced to ground, karma, and maturity. However, the uplifting correspondences include stability, foundation, practicality, solidity, maturity, patience, growth, and longevity. Persistence and dedication are also two strong correspondences of Saturn that shouldn't be forgotten. One of the biggest challenges with Saturn though is that if any one of these correspondences is worked with more than others, it can throw

the balance and harmony of Saturn out of whack and make life more challenging for a longer period of time than other planets.

Saturn is the contraction principle which is the riposte to Jupiter's expansion principle. By knowing when to harmonize the two, we can find the perfect fulcrum point to work from as we build our lives. Too much maturity and restriction can be detrimental, while too much expansion can be just as detrimental. A final correspondence to note is that Saturn resonates with the musical note "D#." (D Sharp)

Trans-Saturnine Planets/Generational Planets

The following planets are known as the trans-Saturnian planets, and they address much larger cycles. When they come into play, they usually address energies that are bathing the Earth in planet-wide ways rather than on an individual level. However, they still have personal manifestations which we will address as well. Let's start off by looking at their dual nature so that we can understand another subtlety of astrology.

The dual nature of the outer planets

Let's face facts: the outer planets are very far away, and they move slowly. Thus most of their rhythms and interactions affect generations of people rather than individual people. However, there is something else to consider here which comes to us through esoteric astrology in particular, and that is they have a special relationship with the personal planets.

The reason the personal planets are the personal planets is because they were the seven lights in the sky that were observable to the ancients. Their orbits and cycles could be charted by the naked eye when observed long enough, and due to this, their lessons could be applied to everyday human life. While there is a strong possibility that some of the ancients knew about the trans-Saturnian planets, it is more commonly accepted that they weren't discovered until the modern invention of the telescope. A way that esoteric astrology looks at this has to do with the evolution of consciousness of humanity. In short, our species is constantly evolving and developing the collective consciousness that we all share, which of course fuels our intellectual and spiritual growth. This takes place over many years and can have quite profound impacts on life in general on planet Earth. For example, the Renaissance could be seen as one of these shifts in

consciousness of the species as a whole. Another time would be the more recent industrial revolution. Of course this isn't limited to these two time periods, but I simply use them to illustrate the point that throughout our past, these kinds of times and events have served to help us evolve to where we are now.

The way this ties into the outer planets of astrology is that as the collective consciousness of the species has risen, we have also discovered new planets in our solar system. First it was Uranus in 1781, then it was Neptune in 1846, then it was Pluto in 1930, then it was Chiron in 1977, and finally Eris in 2005. As is obvious, these discoveries are becoming more and more frequent as we more rapidly evolve. These discoveries left astrologers with the quandary of how to make them fit the model they had worked with for centuries.

Esoteric astrology took the view that as the collective consciousness of our species raised, we were in a better position to be open to the energies of these planets. Part of this was also that we were now more open to better, more refined views of the initial seven planets. What was set up was a particular pattern of understanding. If the seven lights in the sky of the ancients have to do with the human body and personal cycles, then these planets could be seen as more refined versions of the personal planets. This also means they are the more refined, higher vibrational manifestation of this principle. The reason this view could be taken is because they were only revealed to us when we were ready to work with their lessons and insight. Yet it could not be forgotten nor denied that they also affected people en masse, so a duality was seen and worked with. The trans-Saturnian planets are both higher vibrational counterparts to their corresponding personal planets, and planets that affect groups of people, both natally and in transit. To understand what corresponds to what, it is simply wise to keep in mind the order of the personal planets. When this is kept in mind, a pattern is revealed to us which we can clearly see below:

Personal Planet	Outer Planet
Mercury	Uranus
Venus	Neptune
Mars	Pluto

Jupiter	Eris

There are a few planets missing though. These are the Sun, the Moon, and Chiron. The Sun and the Moon are luminaries and thus represent our inner feminine and masculine sides as discussed above. Coupled with the fact they never retrograde, we can see why they don't fit into the above pattern. This leaves us with Chiron, and Chiron is interesting because it has been called *the rainbow bridge* between the personal planets and the trans-Saturnian planets.

It's also worth mentioning that in the above chart, Saturn is not listed. Logically it stands to reason that it should be on the list, and in time it will be. After all, Eris has only recently been discovered, and there are new discoveries regarding the solar system being made every day. Therefore it stands to reason that at least one more planet will be discovered in our solar system, and when this occurs the pattern will be finalized. We'll then have a mirror of the personal planets with the outer planets. We will have the base human lessons, and at the same time, the broader lessons for our entire species.

Chiron

Chiron is technically a *B Planet* according to astronomers, as opposed to an actual planet, but we've already discussed this point. It takes approximately 51 years to go all the way through the zodiac back to where it was when the individual was born. This can be a powerful moment in the life cycle of the individual, as it corresponds to profound changes and growth. On one hand this can be a time when wounds that have not been healed come home to roost. However, something else you may find just as profound that this is an excellent time for personal and spiritual growth particularly when it comes to inner development.

Chiron corresponds to a major wound in the individual. It gives us insight into the psyche and shows us where there is a wound present. One point to know is that we can heal this wound, but it usually takes an almost Herculean effort to accomplish. Hence often times it is seen as a wound that one cannot heal, but that is highly debatable. Chiron also corresponds to the healing process and in particular how we may interact with energy in

general. If Chiron is retrograde in a natal chart, it tells us that in the most recent lifetime the individual was most likely a healer of some sort. This may not be the most recent chronological lifetime, though, if a particular lifetime in the recent past before that one had a particularly strong healing vibe to it. One of the reasons for its nickname is that by undergoing the healing process, one can put oneself in touch with the macrocosm and in particular how to blend it with the microcosm of the individual self.

Uranus

Uranus is an interesting planet which is reflected in astrology dynamically. Not only does it rotate *on its side*, it also has an eccentric orbit. As the outer planets were discovered (including Chiron), one of the things that astrologers did was look at the state of the world around them at the time of the discovery to get insight into what the planet corresponds to and associates with. Uranus was discovered in 1781, and was originally named "Herschel" after the astronomer that discovered it.

From a historical perspective this was a very transitional time. On one hand there was the American Revolution, so rebellion was in the air. However, this was also the time period of an enlightenment known as Christian mysticism. This saw the broadening of spiritual consciousness, particularly in the Judeo-Christian paradigm. Of course deeper metaphysical truths were present as well, veiled behind that belief system, but that is a topic for another time. Electricity was also just being discovered and developed, and because of this there were plenty of experiments and experimenters that were observing and interacting with this new type of natural energy.

These clues give us insight into the properties and correspondences of Uranus from an astrological perspective. Uranus corresponds to electricity, eccentricity, rebellion, uniqueness, and mass communication. The correspondence of mass communication brings us to another very interesting point of Uranus, which is that since it's a higher vibration of Mercury, it ties back to that personal planet. Whereas Mercury is personal communication, Uranus is mass communication. Whereas Mercury is the mind, Uranus corresponds to the mind of the higher self. A final

correspondence to note is that Uranus resonates with the musical note "G#." (G Sharp)

Neptune

The next planet out is Neptune. Neptune is a fascinating planet from an astrological perspective because it encompasses all of the highs and all of the lows possible. Discovered in 1846, Neptune broke on the scene in a rather diffused yet potent way. This idea alone gives us plenty of clues regarding what it represents and how to work with it. Shipping via the oceans was the major way goods and people were transported from one place to another. This was also shortly before Greenwich Mean Time was established, and it was also during this time that the United States of America had a banking collapse. This was also the time that the French occult revival was occurring, and thus we get insight into its higher manifestation. Neptune corresponds to the imagination, mysticism, metaphysics, creativity, and the overall concept of the muse. Simply knowing these correspondences shows us its relationship to Venus, as Venus corresponds to most of these as well. The main difference between these two, though, is that Venus is more earth and focused on physical manifestation of all of those above correspondences, whereas Neptune is more the inspirational and theoretical side, lacking the grounding required to bring things into reality.

However, Neptune also corresponds to not being able to see things clearly (It is a gas giant, after all), escapism, denial, and vagueness. Of course these are the lower manifestations of Neptune in a chart to a person, but knowing these it is easy to see how Neptune is classified as a malefic to many astrologers. The onus then gets placed on the individual when it comes to working with either the higher or lower manifestations of Neptune. For example, a strong Neptune can produce amazing artistic endeavors, whereas a weak Neptune can produce someone prone to substance abuse and escapism, constantly seeking release and a way out. A final correspondence to note is that Neptune resonates with the musical note "G#." (G Sharp)

Pluto

We find ourselves at the next planet out, Pluto. Pluto was discovered in the 20th century, and has thus been a recent factor in astrology. While, yes, we can trace Pluto's influence backwards through time, we can also look at what has happened since Pluto has been discovered- a period full of violence yet transformation. Transformation for better ends is a major theme of Pluto, which is also considered a higher vibrational manifestation of Mars. It is aggressive, but in the way that the phoenix aggressively rises from its own ashes to be reborn in a better way.

Pluto is what's in the dark and in the deep. It's what is lying below the surface ready to explode in a profound, powerful way. However, because of this, it is oftentimes associated with large scale violence. The best metaphor I've found to describe it is that a lot of times it manifests like a volcano.

Another fact that comes up with Pluto is that we're still learning about it because it's only been known about and worked with for a few decades. Information and data are still being collated, and while some things may be crystal clear and easy to interpret, other things are not. It takes Pluto approximately 248 years to travel through the entire zodiac, so no human has ever had a Pluto return (that we know of), nor have most people had a Pluto opposition at age 124! A final correspondence to note is that Pluto resonates with the musical note "C#." (C Sharp)

Eris

While most places reference the finding of Eris in 2005, it is worth noting that it was originally discovered in March of 2004, and was originally named "UB 313" (Unidentified Body #313). When it was undergoing the naming process, most people looked at the state of the world and created a list of correspondences based on what was occurring on a global scale. Astronomers then decided to name it Eris after the ancient Greek goddess of Chaos due to political and social events that were happening globally.

Here we are, more than a decade later, and some could say that the chaos is still present, while others could say it has subsided. Really there was nothing more chaotic about 2004 than 2017. It seemed that way because of major astrological transits and aspect patterns, so to the astrologically ignorant, it did seem chaotic. However, to those that were in

the astrological know, they knew this was simply this aspect pattern and tough transits interacting, so hence the name of a chaos goddess didn't fit. However, astronomers name planets, and thus we have Eris.

Eris hasn't been studied enough to really draw any correspondences. There are many astrologers out there though that work with Eris and give it many correspondences, but none of the data that goes with this is substantiated with any validity. Thus we find ourselves with a lack of quality correspondences. The linchpin to unlocking this is to remember that Eris is a higher vibration of Jupiter, so we can apply Jupiterian correspondences.

The common correspondences of Eris have to do with what you would expect, since she was the ancient Goddess of Chaos. Hence she represents chaos and the dark in a very dark goddess kind of way. Now do you see why I disagree with this list and other correspondences with Eris? That doesn't fit the mold, and it's still too early to tell how things will pan out from 2004. In 2018 Eris will have only been known about and worked with for fourteen years. Hence it's too early to really tell.

I posit the theory that perhaps instead of these correspondences, there is another set of correspondences that is more cohesive and fairly neutral. As I'm sure you've seen, all of the outer planets are more specialized versions of their inner planetary counterparts. If this line of logic is followed through, then more accurate correspondences can be drawn. Thus Eris corresponds to bringing spirit down into physical form in a practical way, shamanism, accepting the responsibilities that go with growth and an increase in personal power, and perhaps the idea of even a priest king. Besides, let's look at this whole contention from another perspective. We already have a planet of chaos, which is Uranus. I have seen that correspondence in print many times, and it has been around as an idea for a while now. Hence Eris being chaotic is redundant and poorly thought out.

As you have probably already figured out, this is a very cursory glance at the solar system, for it also includes asteroids, solar flares, and several regular visitors in the form of comets and asteroids. The above list is sufficient for now. After all, astrology can be daunting in the beginning, so let's keep it simple, shall we?

Your Earth Sign

I saved the best for last in this chapter. Let us turn our attention into discovering what our Earth sign is. We all have an earth sign. There is a sign for each of us that has to do with where our planet Earth was when we were born. We all know the answer to this, but many of us don't realize we know. The Earth sign of any given horoscopes is the sign *opposite* our Sun sign. Really, this is just logical deduction. If we're standing here on Earth and looking at the Sun, then we are, for all intents and purposes, looking at it as occupying the opposite sign of us in order for us to view it. Thus, if your Sun sign is twenty-five degrees Virgo, then your Earth sign is twenty-five degrees Pisces. When you were born, the Earth was located in the sign of Virgo. It's a detail, but it does tell us how we approach day to day life overall, and this can be quite useful when interpreting our individual horoscopes.

Planetary Glyphs

In astrology, each planet is portrayed as a symbol or glyph. On one level, this is astrological shorthand so that you don't have to write the full name of the planet each and every time you do your work. Astrological signs also have glyphs, but we will focus on those in Chapter 6. These symbols are not arbitrarily created though. They contain levels of symbolism that are not found in just the name of the planet, and by meditating on them and drawing them, we imbed their energies into our subconscious in a more lasting way. The subconscious works predominantly in symbols, so the more symbols we use in our work, the more we are engraining our subconscious with patterns and information. A derivative thought of this is "a picture is worth a thousand words." In Chapter 2 we discussed the circle and the straight line, and we circle back to that now, but on a deeper and more esoteric tangent. Most planets only have one symbol that corresponds to them, but some have two, and below is not only a list of all the planetary symbols, but also how to break them down to understand and synthesize. While I am focusing on the planets here, it should be noted that there are symbols for the asteroids and B planets as well, but that is a conversation for another time.

First let us start with the individual parts that constitute the glyphs. Basically there are only two segments, but there are variations on them that come into play as well:

1. The first shape is the circle. "O" In astrology, it represents eternity, continuity, perfection, and all things related to Spirit. The variation on it you find in astrological glyphs is the crescent, which means an impression from the spiritual world and/or the unknown.

2. The second shape is a straight line! Yes, you read that correctly. However, the main variance on it that you will encounter more often than not is the shape of an equal armed cross "☐". The straight line represents energy emanating out in that particular direction. However, the equal armed cross represents the "Cross of Matter" as the esotericists call it. Thus it represents the physical world and all things related to it.

All planetary glyphs are combinations or variations on these two key underlying concepts. Let us break the glyphs for the seven personal planets down to understand how they fit together. Then you can use this thinking to break down the glyphs of the remaining planets!

Sun: **A** As you can see, it is a perfect circle with a dot in the middle. The dot represents the center point or beginning point, and of course the circle is continuity and eternity. Therefore it represents the sacred center found in all things being central to being surrounded by eternity and Spirit.

Moon: **B** This is the first derivation on the two features I discussed above, but it is quite clear. On one hand it represents how the Moon literally looks during a few of its phases. However, esoterically speaking, it also represents the impressing of Spirit onto the physical world.

Mercury: **C** Here we come to our first multi-piece glyph. We also have the introduction of the Cross of Matter. When we break the pieces of the glyph down, we see a fairly complex yet clear picture of the energy of Mercury. First we see the Cross of Matter at the bottom overcome by the unity and eternity of Spirit and the spirit world. However, at the very top we have a crescent, and the way it is portrayed, it is the influx of Spirit into the spirit world. While that may seem like a contradiction, that is not necessarily so. Another way to view this glyph is to see the crescent at the top as "horns" on Venus, whose glyph is almost identical, save the top crescent. When we take that into account, we see that the glyph itself is saying the conquest of Spirit over matter but that there are some devilish things afoot, specifically in a trickster way, as Spirit impresses itself onto matter.

Venus: **D** This is one of the most well-known astrological glyphs, and one that is commonly found outside of astrology, too. Not only is it used to represent the planet, it is also largely used to represent women in general. The meaning of the glyph is quite simple. It tells us two things: 1) The conquest of spirit over matter, and 2) eternity over the Cross of Matter.

Mars: **E** This is a very interesting glyph because it has two strong associations with it. The first is that it represents energy emanating out from Spirit and the spirit world in a specific direction and with a specific purpose. However, another way it can be translated has to do with the Greco-Roman being of the same name. In this way it can be seen as a shield, with the tip of a spearhead pointing out from behind it. Like Venus, this symbol is commonly found outside of astrology too, and usually represents men.

Jupiter: **F** This glyph is a little different than the others, as is the next glyph, which is for the planet Saturn. In the glyph for Jupiter, we see the Cross of Matter, and a somewhat distorted crescent. Thus on the surface it means the influx of Spirit onto the physical world. However, the cross and the crescent aren't exactly the same as they are in other glyphs that share a similar message. In this image, the crescent is of a larger nature when put into proportion and context of the cross, and thus it points to the

large energy of Jupiter. In this case, the large energy is an indicator that what comes in will be larger than it is for the individual person and may influence more than just them. This is a veiled hint at a classification of Jupiter we will discuss next chapter, which is that Jupiter is known as one of two *social* planets, along with Saturn.

Saturn: **/G** Saturn's glyph is an interesting one with a dual meaning, too. On one hand we see the common elements we've been discussing, but in this case it is the conquest of the Cross of Matter over Spirit, here represented by the crescent. This means it's not a total victory of Spirit, but rather it is the stopping of an attempt by Spirit to enter physical life. However, another hidden piece of symbolism for this glyph is that it looks like a scythe you would use during the harvest season, and in this way reminds us that Saturn reaps.

I'm sure you see what I am saying when you break down the glyphs, so I would encourage you to finish out the remaining glyphs used in astrology for a deeper understanding of the energies of those planets. In the process, you are also training your subconscious to work with these energies in subtler and more profound ways. Much insight can be found when one synthesizes these glyphs into their psyche.

CHAPTER 6: SIGNS

Whereas the planets are the actors and actresses on the stage of the solar system, the signs represent energetic and behavioral patterns that people share, as well as identifying types of situations that may be recurrent in the life of the native. Signs are patterns of energy that affect the soul as it comes down into physical form. At this point though, it is worth taking a brief detour into what a sign actually is, as there is constant unnecessary and juvenile debate about it. Critics will say one thing, while people that work with signs will say another, so let's all get on the same page, shall we?

Signs are NOT constellations!

What did you just say, Bill? What are you talking about? Well, let's look at this from a mentally clean perspective. In our early school years we learn the names of the constellations in the night sky. These include such constellations as Orion, Gemini, Scorpio, Virgo, Pisces, the Big Dipper, and the Little Dipper. We hear the stories of what they were in mythology, and hear the stories of how they became constellations in the first place. Then when we learn about astrology, and we recognize the sign names, our brain realizes that we are familiar with some or all of them, and in our individual minds the connection is made between constellations and signs. One of the reasons for this connection, though, is that among basic astrology books, this differentiation is not addressed. Thus we continue along our astrological studies, not realizing how important of a piece is missing.

Many, many centuries ago signs and constellations were one in the same, but interestingly enough, science changed this. This wasn't intentional, nor the product of a mad scientific community. Rather it was a scientific observation that was made that changed everything. This was the discovery that there is something that exists that became called the precession of the equinoxes. Thousands of years ago the Sun rose in the cardinal fire sign of Aries on Spring Equinox, which is the beginning of

each astrological year. It was observed over time that this ceased to be the case, and that gradually the sign on the eastern horizon at sunrise on equinox changed to Pisces.

The pattern that was recognized was that this shift occurs approximately every 2,200 years or so, and when this cycle continues through to its conclusion, approximately 25,900 years will have passed. This is known as the great year in astrology and esoterica. This is where the idea of the "Age of Aquarius" comes from, for we are closely approaching the time when Aquarius will be the sign that the equinoctial Sun will rise through, and will usher in a new age. When the Piscean shift occurred, we saw the rise of Christianity, for example. Upon realization, astrologers divided the sky into twelve, thirty degree sections that are equal in their size. They also stuck with Aries beginning on Spring Equinox. We know that the constellations continued to exist as well, for we all have been exposed to learning them in our youth. The twelve signs that were decided upon were of course the ones that are equinoctial in placement.

Altogether, the signs are known as the zodiac, which translates to "belt of beasts," for this is what they are. They are a belt due to their equinoctial nature, and the beast reference regards the fact that almost all have a beastly nature to them. More on that later, though. This zodiac uses the names of characters out of ancient mythology, and if we know the stories of the characters we gain insight into these signs. There is another dimension to the signs though, and that is they are very archetypal in nature. As Dr Carl Jung pointed out, there are archetypes that underlie a lot of human behavior. For example, there is a *Warrior* archetype, and *Romantic* archetype, to name just a couple. Therefore when we combine the two ideas, we arrive at an understanding of the basic makeup of the native.

There are many, many variances on this theme, though, which is one of the biggest reasons why astrology is a soft science and not a hard science. There are as many different types of Leos as there are of Pisces, to illustrate this point, and no two are the same. There are several reasons for this, and common sense shouldn't be overlooked. The factors that go into making someone who they are, are quite varied, but I'll provide a short but accurate list here.

1. Environmental Conditions

2. Familial Upbringing

3. Day, time, location, and year of birth

4. Religious and/or spiritual influences

5. Physical condition

Because of the influence of these factors, each individual is different, and hence within the overall spectrum of the sign, you have a plethora of individuals. Lumping people together simply based on their sun sign is a gross abuse of astrology. Yes, there may be some common traits among the masses of people that are all under one sign, but this is true of groups of people from different societies and cultures globally as well. Assumptions based on gross generalizations are usually wrong, and at least ignorant.

There have been debates throughout the years trying to incorporate constellations into astrology and attempting to add or distort the twelve sign system is the norm, but all have met with failure because they are based on an incomplete understanding of astrology. These attempts will meet with continued failure for the indefinite future, I assure you. Discussing signs vs. constellations is something that skeptics and critics try to use to prove their point, but all they really show is their narrow-mindedness and ignorance.

Qualities and Correspondences of Signs

A sign is more than just the above information though, so let's take a moment to flesh out the details of them. For starters, signs are associated with one of the four classical elements: earth, water, air, or fire. Each element corresponds to something different. Esoterically they correspond to the planes used in the western tradition. However, they also correlate to areas of focus that individual people have. For example, earthy people are down to earth and practical, reliable and dependable. They are also slow to change. Water people are people that are in touch with their emotions and have powerful ones. They may also be highly intuitive. People with heavy air in their charts are people that are highly cerebral, intelligent, analytical, social, and can easily grasp advanced mental concepts. However, they may also be people that can be lazy, as it takes a lot of discipline to bring their

ideas into physical manifestation. Fire types of people are people that initiate things. They may be people that are physically active, energetic, and/or have a strong connection with divinity. Please keep in mind that these points are just the tips of the icebergs, and there is a lot more depth happening here. There are three signs per element, rounding out the series of twelve signs.

Besides an elemental correspondence, there is another correspondence, and that is of modalities. There are three modalities in astrology. In short, modalities reveal how the energy of the sign will manifest, and it is based on the concept that each element has approximately three different ways that it will manifest in the world today. These modalities are *Cardinal*, *Fixed*, and *Mutable*. Mutable has also been known in the past as "Common." At the time that phrase was commonly used, it was because the majority of the people in the world had them prevalent in their charts. Cardinal energy is forward thinking, initiatory, and progressive, while fixed energy is that of the status quo, structure, and dependability. Mutable energy is just that: mutable. It is flexible, adaptable, and fluid. Of course most birth charts are different blends and combinations of both modalities and elements, and we can easily see how intricate they may appear on the surface. Each element has a sign that belongs to one of those modalities. Hence there is a cardinal air sign, a cardinal earth sign, a cardinal water sign, and a cardinal fire sign. By understanding modalities, we discover that we can gain a great insight into how someone may live their life, subconsciously or consciously.

At this point let's take a pause and reflect on what we know. Each sign has an element associated with it, as well as a modality. Each sign also has a polarity associated with it. Polarities are more akin to those of a battery rather than a psychological perspective or orientation. Hence one is receptive and one is projective. The air and fire signs are active (projective), while the water and earth signs are passive (receptive). Another set of correspondences to keep in mind when learning signs is whether or not they are masculine or feminine. This is a derivation of the polarities we mentioned above. As much as you could say a sign is *positive*, you could just as easily say it is *masculine*, and *negative* equates with *feminine*. Now, for the cynics in the back of the classroom, this does NOT mean that men are psychologically positive and women and psychologically negative! I

cannot stress this enough because I see very few astrological texts outline this difference. This concept has no bearing on the psyche of individuals that have a high concentration in their chart. Below is a quick reference chart to help delineate and clarify. Following the chart will be brief descriptions of each sign.

The Signs

Sign	Glyph	Element	Modality/Polarity
Aries	♈	Fire	Cardinal/Positive/Masculine
Taurus	♉	Earth	Fixed/Negative/Feminine
Gemini	♊	Air	Mutable/Neutral/Neutral
Cancer	♋	Water	Cardinal/Negative/Feminine
Leo	♌	Fire	Fixed/Positive/Masculine
Virgo	♍	Earth	Mutable/Negative/Feminine
Libra	♎	Air	Cardinal/Positive/Masculine
Scorpio	♏	Water	Fixed/Negative/Feminine
Sagittarius	♐	Fire	Mutable/Positive/Masculine
Capricorn	♑	Earth	Cardinal/Negative/Feminine
Aquarius	♒	Air	Fixed/Positive/Masculine
Pisces	♓	Water	Mutable/Negative/Feminine

There is a special note that should be made about the sign Gemini as well. Technically, Gemini is a neutral gender sign. However, a case can be made for a masculine correspondence because it is an air sign and the element air is seen as masculine. As you can see from the list above, air and fire signs are masculine and positive, whereas water and earth signs are feminine and negative.

This list is also their order in the zodiac beginning with Spring Equinox, and this order is also the house order they are aligned with, or "rule." I.e., Aries is the first sign, and rules the first house. Let's look at traits for each sign:

Aries (♈) Cardinal Fire / Active / Masculine / The Ram

Aries is the first sign in the zodiac and the first sign of the zodiacal year. It is associated with many different concepts. The Planet that rules Aries is Mars, and thus a clue to the energy of Aries is given. Aries is forward thinking and progressive. It is the initiator and the initiate. The key phrase of Aries is "I am," and thus another clue is given to where Aries excels. This is a sign that is associated with defining the self. This can come through self-expression, but also self-exploration and self-reflection. This is the patterning of beginning and of defining identity in a pronounced way. Aries corresponds to the musical note of "C#."

Taurus (♉) Fixed Earth / Passive / Feminine / The Bull

Taurus is an energy pattern of earth. Solid, stable, and practical, Taurus is associated with getting the job done, getting the lead out, and bringing things into physical reality. Dependable, reliable, and consistent, Taurus is stalwart and productive. The planet that rules Taurus is Venus and thus a clue to the energy of the sign. The key phrase of Taurus is "I have," and thus another clue is given, as people with Taurus tend to have what they need, and may like to make sure every base is covered. This is a sign of possession, but not in a bad way, rather a practical way. Taurus corresponds to the musical note of "D#."

Gemini (♊) Mutable Air / Active / Masculine / The Human Twins

Gemini is an energy pattern of air. Flexible, adaptable, intelligent, conversational, inquisitive, and mentally active, Gemini is the sign of personal communication, which is evidenced by the planet Mercury ruling it. The key phrase of Gemini is "I think," and thus a powerful clue is given to what exactly Gemini encompasses. Gemini is dual in nature, as is evidenced by the symbolism of the twins, and it is the first human sign of the zodiac. Gemini corresponds to the musical note of "F#."

Cancer (♋) Cardinal Water / Passive / Feminine / The Crab

Cancer is an energy pattern of water. It is associated with the intuition, powerful and deep emotions, nurturing and being nurtured, religion, and forming emotional bonds. The ruling planet of Cancer is the Moon, and here a clue is given to its properties. Cancer is reflective, and has the ability to be open and receptive to things. The key phrase that is associated with

Cancer is “I feel,” and thus another clue is given as to how it acts and reacts. Cancer enjoys belonging and finding a place to belong. Cancer corresponds to the musical note of “G#.”

Leo (♌) Fixed Fire / Active / Masculine / The Lion

Leo is an energy pattern of fire, like Aries above. However, it is more associated with the idea of static fire, rather than a flash fire. An excellent parallel is found in the ruling planet, which is the Sun. The Sun continually gives light and heat to planet Earth, and in that same way, Leos are known for being consistent like Taurus’ but in a more active, creative, and bold way. Leo is associated with leadership, much like its lion symbol. Lions are the kings of the jungle, and thus they are said to rule. Much in the same way Leos can rule and do make excellent leaders. They are known to have strong wills and creative imaginations. The key phrase of Leo is “I will,” and thus another clue of its energy is given. Leo corresponds to the musical note of “A#.”

Virgo (♍) Mutable Earth / Passive / Feminine / The Virginal Human Maiden

Virgo is another earth patterned energy, and thus it has the ability to fluidly move through the earth plane, making what it chooses, and using what it has. Virgo is associated with the harvest, as well as many other correspondences that are quite varied. A clue to these correspondences can be found in the ruling planet, Mercury. Virgo energy can be critical, adaptable, discerning, discreet, and service oriented. The key phrase for Virgo is “I analyze,” and thus another clue is given. Virgos have the ability to break things down into pieces and reassemble them, oftentimes with pieces left over because they have improved efficiency. Virgo corresponds to the musical note of “C.”

Libra (♎) Cardinal Air / Active / Masculine / The Scales

Libra is another air patterned sign, and because of this, it can be highly cerebral. Libra is the sign associated with balancing things, but also of harmonizing things. It is the sign of weighing what seem to be polar opposites in order to objectively come to a conclusion. However, Libra energy prefers justice, and because of this, Libra energy is excellent for

moderation. Like Taurus, its ruling planet is Venus, and thus a clue is given to its energy. Another clue can be found in its key phrase, which is "I balance." Like Virgo, Libra energy is analytical and can see better ways to do things. Libra corresponds to the musical note of "D."

Scorpio (♏) Fixed Water / Passive / Feminine / The Scorpion, The Eagle, The Serpent, The Phoenix

A lot can be said about this water pattern sign. Scorpio is the most adaptable sign of the zodiac, as is evidenced by all of the symbolism attached to it. It is also the most occult sign of the zodiac, meaning that it is the most hidden and gains the most enjoyment out of discovering things that are hidden. Scorpio is associated with transformation. The life, death, rebirth process is the crux of Scorpionic energy. However, it is also associated with magick, witchcraft, and death. Scorpios are also known for their passion and intensity. It has two ruling planets that give further clues: Mars and Pluto. Scorpio is highly analytical and prone to masks. The key words of Scorpio are "I create," and thus further insight is given into the nature of this sign. Scorpio corresponds to the musical note of "E."

Sagittarius (♐) Mutable Fire / Active / Masculine / The Centaur

Being the final fire pattern sign in the zodiac, Sagittarius energy is the fluid fire. It ebbs and falls, freely moving about the planes. The key words of "I perceive" reveals what is truly going on underneath it all. It is associated with the truth and spirituality, as well as the freedom to make such things happen. Nomadic in behavior, Sagittarius energy is that of the strategist, but also the alchemist, morphing from one state to another easily. Its ruling planet of Jupiter gives a further clue to its nature. Sagittarius corresponds to the musical note of "F."

Capricorn (♑) Cardinal Earth / Passive / Feminine / The Goat, The Sea Goat

This earth patterned sign is the eldest of the three, and therein lies the secret. Being physical, Capricorn is associated with making things manifest on the physical plane, as well as old age, responsibility, maturity, and management. Capricorn is that of stability, but not static stability. This is the

stability that produces, yet is able to be built upon. The key words of "I use" pretty much sum it up. Its ruling planet of Saturn gives a further clue as to how this energy works in life. Capricorn corresponds to the musical note of "G."

Aquarius (♒) Fixed Air / Active / Masculine / The Energy Bearer

The final air patterned sign of the zodiac is that of Aquarius, and it brings with it the uniqueness one would expect from ample mental plane work. Aquarius is the energy of the group in many different ways. The group mind is something that Aquarius understands very well. Aquarius is known as intelligent, but also very eccentric. It's not that any habits or behaviors are odd, but rather what is emphasized is identity of the self. An accurate summary could be *we are all individuals*. Key words of "I know" speak volumes about what Aquarians can easily accomplish. The ruling planets of Aquarius are Saturn and Uranus. Aquarius corresponds to the musical note of "A."

Pisces (♓) Mutable Water / Passive / Feminine / The Two Fishes

From the group mind of course springs the dissolution into the group mind, hence we come to the water patterned sign of Pisces. Pisces is that of redemption and resurrection. It is the sign of sacrifice but also that of group identification. Dreamy and etheric, no two Pisces are the same. Mystic and metaphysicians, Pisces move through the planes with ease. This sign is the most psychic of the zodiac. However, they are sensitive to the vibrations around them and while creative, can indulge in that too much. Their key phrase of "I believe" gives insight into their more spiritual side. We gain further insight into the nature of Pisces when we learn the two ruling planets are Jupiter and Neptune. Pisces corresponds to the musical note of "B."

This is a solid starting point for learning their signs and their basic attributes. Remember that one of the best ways to apply this material is to think of the amount of influence in the whole chart rather than just focusing on one facet of the chart, such as only the Sun sign. However, you can also use this material to understand particular facets of astrology, too.

Exercise #6: Go back to the chart you have been drawing, and add in the names of the signs and ruling planets as they correspond to the houses and divisions you already have recorded. When done with that, add in the ruling planets of the signs so you have a comprehensive zodiacal mandala in front of you to study as you work with this book.

There is another subtle teaching to remember as well. Some of the signs have two planetary rulers, so how do we work with them when it comes to chart interpretation? The easiest way to integrate this material is to understand that if you were born during the daylight of a particular sign, the traditional planet is considered the ruling planet of the sign for that particular chart. If you were born at night, the newer, outer planet would be considered the ruling planet of the chart. For example, an Aquarian born during the day would be ruled by Saturn, whereas an Aquarian born at night would be more Uranian.

Also of note regarding the signs is that each one corresponds to an image, and some signs correspond to two or more. These are traditional images that are associated with the signs that have come down to us through the centuries. They convey deeper, subtler, yet more profound truths of astrology. The general concept behind the images is that they reveal to us *how* the energy of the sign may manifest. In short, signs with animals as images may manifest as more beastly in nature, so working with a heavy concentration of that sign during a lifetime may be more of a conquest of humanity over animal impulses. In contrast, the signs that have human images reveal the native is working with more humanistic concepts, ideas and approaches during this lifetime. There is even one sign that is not an animal nor a human, and that is Libra, which is the scales.

People that have high concentration of Libra in their chart are dealing with situations that have to do with bringing things in order, harmony, and balance, within themselves and within the context of the greater world at large and the consensual paradigm. The ancient Egyptians understood this concept very well with their idea of cosmic order, and it is something that is wise for us to contemplate as we grow through life.

In addition to a night or day birth governing the ruling planet of a sign for the signs that have two ruling planets, there is another dimension of

astrology to incorporate with regards to the time of day of one's birth. If one is born during the day, then the Sun plays a larger than average role in the life of the native, but if they are born at night, it is the Moon that holds sway over the native. This material can be used in conjunction with the other pieces we have looked at, and is not meant as a replacement, but rather to provide additional information into the psyche of an individual. This also means that someone born under a sign that has two ruling planets will always align with the Sun and the personal planet ruler, whereas an individual born at night under that same sign would have the Moon and the "newer" planet as ruler. This is worth noting because the planets that exist beyond Saturn, but including Saturn and Jupiter, are said to be generational or group planets because they move so slowly. This lines up quite nicely with the idea that the Moon represents our day to day almost unconscious trip through manifested life.

There is one final facet of signs to know now as we continue our trip through astrology, and that is the concept of the decanates. The short version of decanates is that they are three, ten degree subdivisions within a sign, and each one is ruled by a particular planet. In this way they can be seen as minor influences on how the energy of the sign manifests. So, for example, if your Sun sign is Leo, its location could be in the decanate of the Sun within the sign of Leo. If this placement is occurring, then this would represent the even sunnier side of Leo energy than someone with their Sun in a different decanate. However, both individuals would share Leo characteristics overall. These would be more minute and detailed differences. In a lot of ways, decanates are one of the few remains from older systems of astrology, but that is a topic that has been discussed frequently throughout the years.

The planets that are assigned the decanates are not arbitrary placements either. There is a logic and a rhythm to them. Also keep in mind that it is wise to layer the decanates with whether the individual was born at night or during the day, as mentioned above. Someone that was born at night of a particular decanate will be vastly different than someone born during the day of the same decanate due to the lunar vs solar influence. Here is the table of decanates, and after it I will explain the how and why of planet placement.

Sign	Decanate 1, 0-10°	Decanate 2, 10-20°	Decanate 3, 20-30°
Aries	Mars	The Sun	Jupiter
Taurus	Venus	Mercury	Saturn
Gemini	Mercury	Venus	Saturn (Uranus)
Cancer	The Moon	Mars (Pluto)	Jupiter (Neptune)
Leo	The Sun	Jupiter	Mars
Virgo	Mercury	Saturn	Venus
Libra	Venus	Saturn (Uranus)	Mercury
Scorpio	Mars (Pluto)	Jupiter (Neptune)	The Moon
Sagittarius	Jupiter	Mars	The Sun
Capricorn	Saturn	Venus	Mercury
Aquarius	Saturn (Uranus)	Mercury	Venus
Pisces	Jupiter (Neptune)	The Moon	Mars (Pluto)

The planet is parenthesis is the outer planet correspondence, as you can tell, and the rest are the personal planets. At first glance it may look like the planets are arbitrarily assigned, but that is not the case. When we take a more analytical look at the chart, we see that the decanate of each sign is ruled by the ruling planet of that sign. Understanding the second and third decanates is a little trickier though, but there is a rhyme and a reason to it. The second decanate of any given sign is ruled by the planet that is the ruling planet of the following sign *of that element*. Hence you do have to know the sequence and elemental correspondences of each sign at this point. For example, the next fire sign in the sequence after Aries is Leo, and it is ruled by the Sun. Thus the second decanate of Aries corresponds to the Sun. This logic should also be applied to understand the third decanate. The third decanate is the ruling planet of the sign of the same element that is the *next* sign in the sequence. Following our example through regarding Aries, we know that the third fire sign in the sequence is Sagittarius, and lo and behold, Sagittarius' ruling planet is Jupiter, which is the ruling planet of the third decanate of Aries! I will freely admit though, the application of decanates is something that is a little beyond astrology 101, so you may want to consider waiting to integrate it into your work. Simply know that material is here when you are ready to use it.

In addition to the decanates, there is another detailed point to know about the placement of planets in signs: There are some planets that fit with

some signs better than other planets. We all know that fire and water don't mix from a science perspective, and what this tells us about astrology is that Mars (fire) may not interact well when located in a water sign (I.e., Cancer, Pisces). There is a system that covers this though, and I have found over the years this can be a cheat to learning how to apply astrology if you work with it from the start. Briefly, this is known as *dignities*, or planets being *dignified*. Really, there is a lot more to it than that, as these placements only sometimes have to do with actual dignities. Other times this covers when planets are located in weak positions, too, and there's nothing dignified about that. When discussing this material we are looking at four basic concepts: Dignified, Exaltation, Detriment, and Fall. Let's break these three terms down for a better understanding.

Dignified is pretty forward, as it means a planet is dignified when it is in the sign it rules. Exaltation is pretty much on the surface with the term itself as well. When a planet is said to be exalted, this means it is as strongly placed as it can get, so this is just about an ideal placement. This doesn't mean everything will roll along easily with no challenges, but rather the lessons and personal development that come from its placement will be maximized, and forward progress will be made even if it is arduous rather than easy to achieve. When a planet is in detriment, it is considered substantially weaker but still fairly workable with a lot of energy and attention on personal development. However, a planet in its fall is considered very weakly placed in general, and thus it takes a lot of work to undertake the same life lessons during this incarnation.

Being a big believer in charts, here is another handy one to refer to when you need a quick reference. Let's take a closer look at this, and then we will discuss *why* this material is the way it is.

Planet	Exaltation	Dignified	Detriment	Fall
Sun	Aries	Leo	Aquarius	Libra
Moon	Taurus	Cancer	Capricorn	Scorpio
Mercury	Virgo	Gemini	Sagittarius	Pisces
Venus	Pisces	Taurus	Aries	Virgo
Mars	Capricorn	Aries	Libra	Cancer
Jupiter	Cancer	Sagittarius	Gemini	Capricorn
Saturn	Libra	Capricorn	Cancer	Aries
Uranus	Scorpio	Aquarius	Leo	Taurus

Neptune	Leo	Pisces	Virgo	Aquarius
Pluto	Aquarius	Scorpio	Taurus	Leo
North Node of the Moon	Gemini	Libra	Aries	Sagittarius
South Node of the Moon	Sagittarius	Virgo	Pisces	Gemini

To understand the above chart, we should pay attention to the rhythm present. When a planet is exalted in one sign, it is considered in its fall in the sign's opposite. The second half of the equation is that if we remember a planet is considered dignified in the sign it rules, then it is also considered in its detriment in the opposite sign of that one. This rhythm is one of the reasons why this chart may not look like other charts you find on the subject. Over the last thirteen years of astrology work, and while writing this book, I kept discovering conflicting information about this topic. Rather than try to decide what was right and what was wrong, I searched for underlying patterns and rhythms, and when that logic was applied, I arrived at the chart above. Therefore, yes, this deviates from other material, but now that you know the reason why, you can decide for yourself what you would like to use, and how. Basically, I found the formula and followed it through to its completion. Yep, like I said earlier in the book, scientific method of logic and scientific thought are all our friends.

There is one final thing to note about the astrological signs. Unlike the planets, the glyphs for the signs are based on the way the constellations were said to have appeared to the ancients. Thus for example, you can take the glyph of Aries and overlay it on top of the constellation. There is not as much esoteric meaning in these glyphs as there are for the planetary ones. However, they do take a little more creativity to visualize, as some of them are a stretch of the imagination to mentally see in your mind's eye.

CHAPTER 7: HOUSES

In astrology, the sky is divided into 12 sections, known as houses or temples. Each house focuses on a different life area that has common themes that run through them. Thus each set of 3 houses is also called a quadrant, which gives us four quadrants to the wheel. Each quadrant follows a set pattern of modalities: angular, succedent, and cadent. As is implied by the name, the angular house is the house that sits on one of the four angles in a chart: the 1) ascendant, 2) IC, or Imum Coeli, 3) descendant, or 4) MC, or Midheaven.

The house system has evolved over the years, starting from simply four quadrants and evolving from there. There is a lot of documented history of the house systems to be found, but in practical day-to-day terms there are only two house systems to be aware of: Equal houses and unequal houses. There are other house systems out there, but those are the two most commonly used types. Each system has its pros and cons. Unequal houses can lead to a more personalized chart, because in essence it's stating that not everyone has the same emphasis on the same life areas. Thus you may have a heavy focus on occupation but almost no emphasis on personal relationships. This chart system can also lead to intercepted signs which usually indicate blockages of some type in the life areas that they correspond to. An intercepted sign is a sign that occurs between two signs on house cusps and therefore does not rule its own house. However, the challenge that goes with using an unequal house system is that it breaks down at extreme north or south longitudes, for example, being ineffective in Norway, northern Russian, or the North Pole. The other house system to be aware of is the equal house system, which is the one favored by the legendary Robert Hand. It uses the same number of degrees for each house. Thus, for example, if the ascendant is 16 degrees Aries, then each cusp will be 16 degrees, and there will be no intercepted signs. One of the pros to this is that it does not break down at extreme longitudes. However, a con to this

is that it treats everyone as being equal with regards to their day-to-day activities, thus homogenizing the person and the chart.

It's also worth remembering that the houses are in the visible and invisible sky. The houses at the bottom of the chart (the 1st through the 6th) are below the skyline, and thus cannot be seen, whereas the houses at the top of the chart (the 7th through the 12th) are occurring in the visible sky, and can be seen or estimated to the best of your abilities. This is one of the reasons why some houses reflect the inner life while others reflect the outer life.

If you are using an unequal house system, remember to look for intercepted signs. Wherever there is an intercepted sign in the chart this also means that the opposite sign is intercepted in the opposite house. Thus you have an axis to work with in order to harmonize the affairs of the houses. Intercepted signs are present when there is a blockage and the energy can't flow freely through the chart. As another note, remember to look for stelliums in a chart. Technically a stellium occurs when there are three or more chart points located in the same sign and/or the same house. A stellium represents when energy is knotted in a particular chart and thus cannot flow freely throughout the entire chart. Also pay attention to house cusps. The general rule of thumb is that the sign on the house cusp is the way the energy is patterned for the whole house, but this isn't always the case. For example, if you're using unequal houses, you may find that the house cusp is Gemini, but right after the house cusp the dominant sign of the house is Cancer. This tells us that the energy of Cancer is the way that the affairs of the house may play out rather than the way of Gemini. Following this line of logic through then tells us that it is also wise to pay attention to houses that have a critical degree as the house cusp. The most glaring example of this is when a house has an anaretic degree on its cusp (the 29th degree). This tells us that during this lifetime the handling of the affairs of that house are coming to a close from a pattern perspective. Hence whatever happens in that life area may be more prevalent and life altering than other houses that may be spatially bigger.

It is wise to look for planets near angles and house cusps. When a planet is located close to a house cusp, it means that planet will get triggered by transit in a more dynamic way. The further away a planet is

from a house cusp, the less diffused the effect of the transit in that particular life area. It's also wise to remember Midpoints, as they can activate via transit in particular life areas. A final word on houses addresses a subtlety of the chart: the interplay between modalities of signs and the natural energy of the particular houses. For example, if you have a cardinal house, but in your chart it is a fixed sign, you may find a much different flow of energy than if the chart you're using has a cardinal or mutable sign on the house cusp. If in doubt with this, come back to basics regarding the energy of the modalities.

The Houses

1st House:
House of the Self: Natural Zodiac House Ruler: Aries

Thus the energy of this house is cardinal. This is an angular house, and the sign on the 1st house cusp is also known as the ascendant or rising sign in the chart. This house also begins the first quadrant, known as the quadrant of *Inner Self Awareness and Intuition*. In the natural zodiac, the ruling planet of this house is Mars.

All concepts related to the self are being addressed in this house. This is, but not limited to, the following list: self-esteem, self-value, self-worth, self-confidence, self-expression, self-respect, self-love, self-trust, and faith in the self. The sign on the house cusp tells us how (archetypically speaking) this plays out in life, and any planets that are located there give insight into how the energy is anchored in day-to-day life. This is true of all houses, but this is especially worth noting in this one because the ascendant is the face that is viewed in public, and the lens through which we view the world. This is the mask that is present when interacting with the outside world. This house also corresponds to charisma and energetic attraction.

The energy of the first house is cardinal and masculine, in that it is the beginning of that quadrant. Retrograde planets located here tend to emphasize the idea of inner self awareness. Practically speaking, it corresponds to the direction east. Colors that correspond to the first house are pale colors and whites. It is known as a diurnal house, meaning it corresponds to the day rather than the night. Mercury and Saturn are both strong when located here.

2nd House:
Personal Resources and Personal Resource Management, and Values:
Natural Zodiac House Ruler: Taurus

This house follows the first, and is thus fixed in the way that it manifests through life. This house is the halfway point for the first quadrant. The ruling planet of the house is Venus.

This is the house of personal resources and personal resource management, and this is a broadly encompassing house for this reason. While many astrological texts say this is the house of money, this is only because money is a physical representation of how we manifest our personal resources using our management skills. This is also the house of physical comforts and our view towards them. Hence part of this also has to do with our physical world desires and criteria for comfort.

In reality, personal resources are more than just things that have to do with money. Rather this house can be looked at from all the planes and encompasses all the personal resources we have. On the physical plane, it represents the resources that we have and use to better our life experience. On the emotional plane this house represents our emotional resources, such as our emotional strength and energy we have to invest in a project. On the mental plane this can represent our mental resources, and this is where the concept of values come in. What do you value and why? Of course for this reason, the idea of values also ties into the spiritual plane as well.

This house is known as succedent with a natural feminine energy to it. It is a nocturnal house, meaning that it corresponds to the night, and the color associated with this house is green. The direction this house corresponds to is east-north-east. Jupiter is strong when located in this house for the reasons listed above having to do with resources and the management thereof.

3rd House:
Personal Communication, Short Distance Travel or Trips, the Personal Computer, and Siblings: Natural Zodiac House Ruler: Gemini

This is the 3rd house in the first quadrant, and is thus a cadent house. An easy way to understand the energy of this house is to think of it as a

transitioning house, as the first quadrant begins to dissolve into endings, yet it also acts as a bridge to the next quadrant. The ruling planet of this house is Mercury. Thus the energy of this house is mutable in manifestation.

This is the house of personal communication and is thus related to news traveling in a small and easily digested format. Thus it corresponds to the personal computer, newspapers, magazines, gossip, and small bits of information that may come our way. This is also the house that corresponds to short distance travel and trips. Hence it may represent a lot of small jaunts around town rather than an extensive excursion to a foreign country across the ocean. The best example of this is to think of it as corresponding to weekend getaways. Emails and faxes also fall into this house. Infrastructure travel within a country is something that is also covered by this house.

Contracts and deeds also fall in this house. Along a different tangent, this house also corresponds to siblings and cousins that we are close to. Neighbors and the neighborhood also fall into the affairs of this house. This is a masculine house that is nocturnal, and it corresponds to the direction North-north-east. The planets that are strong here are the Moon and Mars. The color associated with this house is orange.

4th House:
House of the Home and the Roots: Natural Zodiac House Ruler: Cancer

Thus the energy of this house is cardinal. This is an angular house, and the chart point located at the beginning of it is known as the *Imum Coeli*, usually shortened to the *IC*, and an alternative name for this point is the *Midnight Point*. This house also begins the second quadrant, known as the quadrant of *Inner Awareness of the Outside World, Emotions, and Feelings.* In the natural zodiac the ruling planet of this house is the Moon.

This can be a complex house to understand because it encompasses a lot of different topics, and while some are related, others are not. This is the house of the home and all things related to the domestic life. This can cover everything from the dishes and the laundry to the physical structure of the home itself. However, another set of correspondences that go along with this have to do with the roots, the past, and the formative years. Some

astrologers say that this also corresponds to the female authority in life during the formative years. Older astrology books say that this is the house of the mother, but that is not technically correct. If someone was raised by their grandmother, as an example, then this would refer to her because she is the dominant female authority figure present in the formative years. This would be a deviation from other correspondences. Some people say that the grandparents are a correspondence of the 3rd house, while others say the 11th house. However, the 4th house trumps both of these possibilities because it is an angular house, and thus carries more strength. The fourth house is also the house of our heritage and roots as they apply to genetics and family history. Some astrologers say that the 4th house also signifies qualities at the end of life, and that the sign on the cusp of the fourth house denotes end of life characteristics. Because of the ties with the roots and where one comes from, this is also the house that addresses religion and the belief systems of the individual relating to how they were imprinted onto the psyche of the individual.

A particular detail to note is that the IC represents the northernmost point in the sky, and anything placed here is considered to be weak, or at least at the weakest point in the chart. The easiest way to think about this is to consider that the energy is veiled. Existentially this is because this is the point that is farthest away from the light of the Sun as it travels across the sky. Hence the opposite house, which is the 10th, is considered one of the strongest, if not the strongest, in the chart since this is where the Sun is the strongest on its journey through the sky. With this house we also see the transition into the western hemisphere of the chart. The 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 10th, 11th, and 12th houses of the chart are said to be the eastern hemisphere because the ascendant represents the eastern horizon. The eastern hemisphere corresponds to being more of an independent and free will type of energy. This is the energy of the proactive person. The western hemisphere is that of the soul that is cleaning up karma and that can work within the system as the system stands.

The energy of the first house is cardinal and feminine, in that it is the beginning of that quadrant. Retrograde planets located here tend to emphasize some quality of life present during the formative years. For example, a retrograde Jupiter located here could indicate either parents splitting up when the person was young, or a dual life in some fashion.

Practically speaking, it corresponds to the direction north. The color that corresponds to the fourth house is red. It is known as a nocturnal house. Saturn and the Sun are strong when located here.

5th House:
House of Creative Self-Expression: Natural Zodiac House Ruler: Leo

This house follows the first, and is thus fixed in the way that it manifests through life. This house is the halfway point for the second quadrant. The ruling planet of the house is the Sun.

This is the house that represents creative self-expression. This can encompass many different things and is usually referred to as the house or art, music, all creative endeavors, and gambling. The concept of gambling can be broadened to include speculation, in particular, financial speculation. As a side note, this is the house of fortune, usually seen as good, but if ill aspected then not so much. This is also known as the house of children. Part of the correspondence that has to do with children has to do with the health of the children as well. Another interesting correspondence is that this is the house of recreational sex, rather than intentionally procreative sex. As can be deduced from the above list, any ability or talent that someone has that has to do with art, hobbies, and things that are created fall into this house.

This house is known as succedent, with a natural masculine energy to it. It is a diurnal house, meaning that it corresponds to the day, and the color associated with this house is gold, or bright yellows, or as William Lily says, "Honey color." Another color correspondence has to do with the duality of black and white. The direction this house corresponds to is north-north-west. Venus is strong when located in this house for the reasons listed above having to do with creating things of lasting value that express the creativity of the individual.

6th House:
Day to Day Work Routine, Unusual Pets, the Government, and Health: Natural Zodiac House Ruler: Virgo

This is the 3rd house in the second quadrant, and is thus a cadent house. An easy way to understand the energy of this house is to think of it as a transitioning house, as the second quadrant begins to dissolve into

endings, yet it also acts as a bridge to the next quadrant. The ruling planet of this house is Mercury. Thus the energy of this house is mutable in manifestation.

This is the house of the day-to-day work routine and in particular the house of health. However, this is also the house of government and the keeping of unusual pets. The natural world is a correspondence of this house, in so far as the interaction between the individual and the natural world around them. However, with this house we also have the beginning of a particular facet of the astrological mandala. This house is ruled by Mercury, as is the 3rd house, and with this we have the beginning of serendipity in the chart of the houses. A particular correspondence of this house that is oftentimes neglected is that this house corresponds to being of service and showing gratitude for what one has. Some kind of skill mastery is another correspondence that can be tied to the 6th house. Hence in order to accomplish that, discipline and structure on a day-to-day level are required.

This is a feminine house that is nocturnal, and it corresponds to the direction West-north-west. The planets that are strong here are Mars, Venus, and Mercury. The colors associated with this house are dark colors in general. Of particular note for this house, the 9th, and the 12th: Pay attention to any planets in this house that are within five degrees of the descendant, for these can be considered conjunct an angle, and thus manifest stronger in the life of the native. This is also true for five degrees into the next angular house for the remainder of the houses. Challenging or unsupporting aspects to this house may indicate challenges or growth opportunities regarding health early on in life, and may continue to be triggered throughout the life of the native.

At this point it becomes wise to mention that this brings a certain rhythm in the chart to a close. This rhythm is that of the first six planets being located north of (or under) the horizon line. When this occurs, it tells us that there is a lot of internal work that is occurring in the life of the individual. This does not mean that the individual is an introvert, but rather it simply means that there is a lot more going on in the mind of a person than what they might show. This is in contrast to the 7th-12th houses, which are said to be located above the horizon line, or in the visible sky. The activity that is located there is more extroverted in nature and manifestation.

Usually someone that has a lot of activity there is someone that is actively engaged in the outside world. In some ways they are extroverts, but in other ways they are not. Thus the focus of the first six houses is internal work and inner personal development and choosing to process things before taking action.

7th House:
House of Personal Relationships: Natural Zodiac House Ruler: Libra

Thus the energy of this house is cardinal. This is an angular house. This house also begins the third quadrant, known as the quadrant of *Outer Awareness of the Outside World and Sensation*. In the natural zodiac the ruling planet of this house is Venus.

This is a fairly straight forward house, so it is easy to understand its traits and what it encompasses. However, while it is straight forward, it may not be an easy house to work with because it is so broad in what it encompasses. This is the house of personal relationships. Commonly called the house of love, but it is more than that in actuality. Any relationship we have in our lives that is one-on-one in nature is covered in this house. The chart point that lies on the 7th house cusp is the descendant, and this addresses two specific points. To begin with, the descendant addresses our one on one relationships, no matter what form they take, whether they are intimate or professional. The second thing this point addresses is how we unwind at night. Do we like to do the same thing over and over again, or do we prefer variety?

Practically speaking, it corresponds to the direction west. The colors that correspond to the seventh house are black and dark colors. It is known as a masculine and diurnal house. Venus and the Moon are strong when located here.

8th House:
House of Shared Resources, Shared Resources Management, Inheritances, Legacies: Natural Zodiac House Ruler: Scorpio

This house follows the seventh, and is thus fixed in the way that it manifests through life. This house is the halfway point for the third quadrant. We also come into a new situation here in that there are two ruling planets of this house in the natural zodiac: Mars and Pluto.

This can be a tricky house to understand and work with because it encompasses a lot of different things that may seem disjointed but can really be tied together. A lot of this can be seen when the 2nd house is studied. This house addresses such things as managing a joint bank account, as well as the resources of several people. Hence this is oftentimes called the house of business. However because of this, this is also the house that addresses the legacy one leaves behind and any inheritances that may go along with it. On an interesting side note, this is also the house of procreative sex. On another interesting side note, this house has a fairly unique attribution to it, which is that when you have planets that constitute a stellium here, you may find that psychic skills are increased to the degree of mediumship.

This house is known as succedent with a feminine masculine energy to it. It is a nocturnal house, meaning that it corresponds to the night, and the color associated with this house is dark green. The direction this house corresponds to is west-south-west. The Moon is strong when located in this house but only if the chart is a nocturnal one. Also of note is that Saturn is strong here as well, having to do with longevity, seeing long term situations, and all things related to the aging process and the responsibilities that go along with the above mentioned qualities.

9th House:
Expansion of the Higher Mind, Publishing, Spirituality, Investments, and Expansion in General: Natural Zodiac House Ruler: Sagittarius

This is the 3rd house in the third quadrant and is thus a cadent house. An easy way to understand the energy of this house is to think of it as a transitioning house, as the third quadrant begins to dissolve into endings, yet it also acts as a bridge to the next quadrant. The ruling planet of this house is Jupiter. Thus the energy of this house is mutable in manifestation.

This is the house that has to do with the expansion of consciousness, as well as making an impact on people outside of the self on a broad level. Hence a lot of different concepts come into play here, ranging from the expansion of consciousness to publishing, in that it is mass dissemination of ideas to assist others in their growth, or at least your own growth. It is important to note that this is the house of spirituality rather than religion,

because spirituality shows a distinctive growth of consciousness of the spirit, and in this way it grows beyond what most codified religions can teach because of their emphasis on social control.

This is a masculine house that is diurnal, and it corresponds to the direction south-south-west. The planet that is strong here is Jupiter. The color associated with this house is light green.

10th House:
House of the Occupation, Career, & the Overall Vibe of Life: Natural Zodiac House Ruler: Capricorn

Thus the energy of this house is cardinal. This is an angular house. This house also begins the fourth quadrant, known as the quadrant of *Outer Self-Awareness and Thinking*. In the natural zodiac the ruling planet of this house is Saturn.

This is a very interesting house because it encompasses two very distinct ideas. The first idea it addresses is that of the career and the occupation. Notice that this differs from the day to day work routine, which is addressed in the 6th house. A reason for this differentiation is that some people work jobs that are not in their career while they are building their career. This house addresses more of the vocation and long term professional goals. It has also been said that this house corresponds to the father, which is the counterpart to the 4th house which is the house of the mother.

However, since the 10th house is at the top of the chart, it is also the point known as the *MC*, or *Midheaven*. Thus what sign is on the 10th house cusp gives insight into the overall backdrop of life that may not be tangible. Any planets that are located here also carry greater weight in the life of the native, whether this is professionally speaking or not. Transits to these planets are also more impacting in the life of the native than other planets, and the manifestation of these transits is more readily visible.

Practically speaking, it corresponds to the direction south. The colors that corresponds to the tenth house are pink and light red. It is known as a

feminine and nocturnal house. Jupiter, the Sun, and Mars are strong when located here.

11th House:
House of Groups, Non-Profit Organizations, and Humanitarian Efforts: Natural Zodiac House Ruler: Aquarius.

This house follows the tenth, and is thus fixed in the way that it manifests through life. This house is the halfway point for the fourth quadrant. We also have two ruling planets of this house in the natural zodiac: Saturn and Uranus.

A complex house, the 11th house has a lot of correspondences to it, and it can seem daunting at first. This house encompasses everything from informal groups of friends to more formal ones, like the American Congress. This is the house of group work of all kinds, but in particular, group work that has the best intent of all as their goal. Groups and endeavors that are looking for solutions for everyone are 11th house organizations, and this also includes humanitarian efforts. Part of this also addresses exchanging philosophical concepts, which is why this is an air house in the natural zodiac.

This house is known as succedent with a masculine energy to it. It is a diurnal house, meaning that it corresponds to the day, and the color associated with this house is yellow. The direction this house corresponds to is south-south-east. The Sun and Jupiter are strong when located in this house.

12th House:
The Subconscious, Endings, Undoings, and all Things Hidden: Natural Zodiac House Ruler: Pisces

This is the 3rd house in the fourth quadrant, and is thus a cadent house. An easy way to understand the energy of this house is to think of it as the final transitional house, as the third quadrant begins to dissolve into endings, yet it also acts as a bridge to the next quadrant. The ruling planets of this house are Jupiter and Neptune. Thus the energy of this house is mutable in manifestation.

An interesting house, and arguably the most complex one in astrology, the 12th house comprises a lot of different correspondences, and is usually scrutinized quite heavily. It can be very nebulous to understand and work with, but if basic principles are remembered, it can be quite a powerful house. The 12th house is the house of the subconscious, endings, and undoings. Thus this house represents all things hidden below the surface. What makes this especially noteworthy is that this also includes our own subconscious minds, so in some ways this house is more personal than other houses. This is the house that can eat us from the inside out if we're not careful. However, this can be a very useful house for those that want to understand hidden motives and hidden behaviors. If you'll notice, then, this house can be quite psychological in its focus, particularly internally psychological. Because of this, this house also corresponds to mental health institutions, psychological health in general, psychology, and the psychic side of life.

This is a feminine house that is nocturnal, and it corresponds to the direction east-south-east. The planets that are strong here are Saturn and Venus. The color associated with this house is green.

The Debate

In astrology there is a great debate among some people whether whole sign houses are better than houses of varying size. It has been written about extensively, and I won't tread on trodden ground, but I will chime in so that the person new to astrology has at least a baseline understanding of it and can decide to pursue this topic in more depth if it interests them.

House systems are based on the rotation of the Earth on its axis, and the whole sign system is one that says every house is equal in size. Therefore, if your ascendant is sixteen degrees Cancer, then every house cusp begins at sixteen degrees of the next sign. While this isn't the most popular house system out there, it is the one that is used by many high profile and prolific astrologers, who also argue in favor of it being the best system.

However, the converse house system to this that is the most popular is an unequal house system, and the most commonly used one of that type is known as the *Placidus* house system. It gets its name from the 17th century

astrologer Placidus de Titis, but it does date back before him. The basic principle of this house system is that it is a division of the sky in a different way than an equal house system. In this system, houses can have varying sizes, and in this house system you can have intercepted signs, which we mentioned earlier in this chapter. There is a problem with this system though, and that is that at extreme northern or southern points here on earth, it breaks down. Whole sign house systems do not. The benefit of the Placidus system though, is that it gives everyone a more personalized chart. And herein lies the philosophical difference between the two.

To use a whole sign house system, you, the astrologer, are effectively saying that life areas get the same treatment across the boards with the individuals you read. In other words, everyone spends the same amount of time on home affairs, the career and occupation, personal relationships, etc. I think we all know enough people in our lives to know that is not necessarily the case for everyone, and this is the biggest downfall of this system. I know plenty of workaholics that spend far more time pursuing their career than they do the personal relationships in their life. This would be reflected in an astrological chart in a couple of different ways. One way is the number of planets located in their tenth house, and the other way would be to have a large tenth house and a smaller fourth house. I have had related discussions with many clients over the years, and I have continually found uneven houses more reflective of the individual, making them more accurate.

But having said that, I can also think of instances for when an equal house system would be of more appropriate use. If you were an astrologer living in Norway, for example, it would be wise to use a whole house system instead, due to the fact that the latitude it is located at is so extremely north that the unequal house systems begin to fall apart. What *falling apart* means is that you begin to see more and more intercepted houses, but logically this could not be the case if intercepted signs signify blockages! This would be like saying that large swaths of people would all have blockages in those life areas, and not only is that unreasonable, it is also mentally deranged to think that, to a large degree!

I share all of this to illustrate the differences, but also to show that neither is better than the other, but rather each one has its strength and weaknesses, and it is up to the individual astrologer to make the choice of

which one to use for one's self. I did choose my words carefully though, because these are not the only two types of house systems out there. There are many, many house systems available to the practicing astrologer. While I have not explored many, I encourage you to do so if it strikes your fancy.

Quadrants and Hemispheres

Quadrants

We touched on quadrants of the wheel back in Chapter 2, but let us return to it now to add more information to what they actually mean. In that chapter, I mentioned them so that you would begin thinking about quadrants immediately. I come back to them here to show *why* I took that approach. There is subtle material that can be extracted from interpreting the quadrants in a broader way than by just looking at the individual signs. This is a continuation on the Hermetic axiom I've quoted a few times in this text: "As Above, So Below." Just like there are individual themes that are pearls of wisdom gleamed from the activity of individual houses, there are pearls of wisdom that are gleamed from the overall quadrant activity.

However, there are two different ways to look at quadrants. The first one is the way I just mentioned. What kind of activity is in particular quadrants of a chart? What quadrants are empty or harshly aspected? What quadrants are dominant? The second way to look at quadrants though, is that they also correspond to seasons of the year, beginning with the Spring Equinox. When we have the change of seasons, we have the Sun entering into a cardinal sign, regardless of whether it is a solstice or equinox. This means that at Spring Equinox, the Sun begins its journey through the first quadrant, which contains houses one through three. At Summer Solstice, the Sun moves into quadrant two, which are houses four through six. At Autumn Equinox, the Sun moves into quadrant three, which are houses seven through nine, and at Winter Solstice it moves into quadrant four, which are houses ten through twelve. Hence we see the entire year can be understood by watching the quadrants play out through the life of an individual during any given energetic year. I emphasize energetic year here to differentiate from the calendar that is commonly used that starts in January rather than on Spring Equinox. Let us take a closer look to see what the quadrant activity reveals to us when we see it in a chart.

1st Quadrant: Inner Life and Developing Personal Trust

This is the first of the four trios in the natural zodiacal wheel. It is the first of the energetic year as well. It is the period of time for the year that runs between Spring Equinox and Summer Solstice. During this time, the energetic current of the year is established. It is, in a way, primal, for it is the first triplicity of the year, making it unrefined, undefined, and untamed. Much like the human psyche, it is what we choose to work with during the year.

In March and April we have the cardinal fire sign of Aries (♈). This is the beginning of the year, and as such it is the energy of youth coupled with the energy of a new cycle beginning. Similar to "The Fool" from the tarot, this is a time to define your actions and agenda for the year. It is also a time when the quest begins for inner self-awareness. What will be sought about the self this year? What facet of the self will be explored? It is a time of great passions and gut instinct responses. Decision, not thought through processes, is what the modus operandi is. Mars (♂) is the ruling planet, and that implies aggressiveness and strength through tests. It is not a passive sign, and that means that the energy of this house is proactive.

In April and May we have the fixed earth sign of Taurus (♉). This sign is the exact opposite in some regards. For starters Venus (♀) rules it. Besides the obvious counterpart of male and female, we have the fact that Taurus is passive and receptive. Taurus is the steady state counterpart to the fiery Aries. Heavy Taurus activity reflects steady state ideas and processes. These are almost 100% the opposite of Aries, with their fiery tempers and go-getter attitudes. Taurus' are plotters and planners who are more comfortable with maintaining the status quo. However, they are also resistant to change. So here we have instincts (Aries) and thought (Taurus); order and chaos. So it is only fitting to throw in the balancer here.

The third sign of this quadrant is the mutable air sign of Gemini (♊), ruled by Mercury (☿). Mercury is the universal solvent. It is the planet of transmutation. Very alchemical in nature, Mercury assists us in changing things. The wry humor of the situation is that while all of these things may be true of Mercury, Gemini is a dual sign! This reminds us that there are always at least two sides to any situation. Gemini's strength is the

ability to see any issue from at least two perspectives. The problem is that a Gemini can't always commit to one view more than the other.

So here in the first triplicity we have:

1) Recognition and Understanding of the Self
2) Personal Understanding and Development
3) Personal Alchemy

This is how the first quadrant translates to the inner life. By being aware of whether a reaction or a choice is made from instincts or thought is the first step towards taking control of the self, using Mercury as the universal change all tool.

Thus, if you should happen to see a lot of planets, aspects, or activity in general in this part of the wheel, then you know the person is working through self-perceptions and issues of the self.

2nd Quadrant: Awareness of the Other, Self-Expression, and Work

In the 2nd quadrant we have the next part of the zodiacal year, lasting from Summer Solstice until Autumn Equinox. In it is the cardinal water Cancer (♋), the fixed fire sign of Leo (♌), and the mutable earth sign of Virgo (♍). Here we have receptivity and sensitiveness with Cancer, the fixed brilliance of the self with Leo, and the discernment and decision making of Virgo. In some ways, this builds on the previous three signs. The masculine instinct of Aries has been changed to the receptive nurturing of Cancer. The fixed pattern of Taurus has changed to the creative outlet provided by Leo, fixed in its creativity. The transmutation ability of Gemini has metamorphosed into discernment from Virgo. Virgo is another sign that has Mercury as a ruling planet, much like Gemini did. Only this time, it is all about the decision-making process rather than the ability to see the other side. It's the process of deciding which you believe in.

Cancer represents the extreme ability to be receptive and impressionable. It is the maiden that is pregnant with new life, whereas Aries was the injector of life. In this very symbolic way, we have a metaphor for life. Also in this way they mirror each other.

But, whereas Taurus was in the first quadrant, we now have it replaced by Leo. The Sun (A) rules Leo, and in this quadrant it represents creativity, self-empowerment, and self-actualization. This is a by-product of the responsible management of resources under the guidance of diligent Taurus in the 2nd house in the first quadrant. Through managing resources like time, money, etc, we can have more to create, thus we can tap into our true potential.

The third and last sign of the 2nd quadrant is Virgo in the 6th house. Here again we have the final house in that quadrant ruled by Mercury, showing the ability Mercury gives us to change one thing from one to another. However, whereas in the first quadrant it was in an opening the mind way, it is more analytical and discerning in this quadrant. This shows that there is an understanding of what things are necessary and what things aren't and the ability to decide between them.

So here in the 2nd quadrant we have:

1) The Foundation of the Self
2) Self-Expression
3) Physical Discipline

Once the individual is ready to receive, the solar light arrives. But it means, by default, discretion between choices. Once base instincts are mastered, greater heights can be achieved, however, this requires greater decision-making skills.

Something else worth pointing out here is the fact that both quadrants are below the horizon line. This translates to internal psychological activity. Usually, when there is a lot of activity in this area, it means that there is a great deal of psychological issues being worked through in this lifetime. Usually that translates to not only psychological but also emotional issues, especially with Cancer there.

There is a pattern worth addressing here, and that is the reflection below the horizon between the 1st two quadrants. Aries is masculine and aggressive while Cancer is feminine and receptive. Gemini is neutral, but Virgo is feminine. What does this mean, you ask?

When you see a lot of activity in this part of the chart, however it may be represented, it usually shows that the individual is working with emotions and feelings. There is a lot of both in this quadrant of the chart, with Cancer being open, sensitive, and receptive, and Leo ruling the 5th house, the house of creativity, where all the attention is on the individual when it creatively turns out correctly. The awareness of the outside world comes from the Virgo aspect. What can the native take to get them where they choose to go? If decision-making processes are improved, can time be saved and things streamlined?

So, to sum this half of the chart up, it is all about what is going on inside the individual. Awareness is coming to fruition. There is still a sense of internalization to it, but it is internalization with the purpose of understanding and coming to grips with the self. Instincts, emotions, feelings, and the intuition are all being developed and refined. However there is still the lack of contact with the outside world, which will be addressed in the top half of the chart.

3rd Quadrant: Relationships and How They Change Us

This quadrant begins with the cardinal air sign of Libra (♎), when the sun moves into the Autumn equinox. This period lasts from Autumn equinox until Winter solstice. In this quadrant we have Libra, which is a sign of balance. In this sign we have the scales of karma weighing out what has come to pass internally up until this point. Then you have Scorpio (♏) energy changing things yet again, but in a different fashion than either Gemini or Virgo. This change comes in the form of an external motivator. The third of this quadrant is the mystical quest of the archer, brought about by the exterior initiated change of Scorpio. The mutable fire sign of Sagittarius (♐) is all about the journey and the spiritual growth that goes with it. Also in this quadrant we begin to get the outer planets involved. This doesn't happen until Sagittarius, but then the 4th quadrant is just the outer planets. The last sign to have an inner planet is Scorpio, which is ruled by Mars.

In the third quadrant, Libra starts off the party being ruled by Venus. Libra is a feminine sign and is receptive in its nature. It is all about finding the balance, and on a psychological level this is an internal process

balancing out what the internal has learned against the experiences of interaction with the outside world.

This sets the stage for Scorpio, who then dumps things on its ear. Once impulses have been received, internalized, and synthesized into the self, balanced against all angles, then things change. Nature abhors a vacuum, so when one set of lessons is learned, then the next one begins. Scorpio is that energy of change. It is masculine and proactive. Therefore its study is the study of transitioning from the internal world to the outside world and interacting with it as well.

Sagittarius then takes what has been changed and breathes new life into it by helping the individual think outside the box, and thinking on a larger scale. Jupiter (♃), the planet of expansion and prosperity, rules Sagittarius. Once the final dissolution of Scorpio has been attained, things can then grow on a larger scale, reaching new heights.

This quadrant is also a lot of times negatively referred to as the quadrant of the sheep. People that go along with the flow may have a lot of activity there, or it may be perceived that people with a lot of activity there tend to go along with the flow. This is because every interaction between them and the outside world is a learning experience, and thus they absorb every morsel of wisdom they can. The best way to do this is to not be distinctive, but rather complacent for the sake of convenience.

A lot of activity in this section of the chart denotes someone that is calm and aware, but likes to experience for the sake of experiencing. Usually internal turmoil is absent. There is also a lot of interaction with the outside world on some level.

So here in the third quadrant we have:

1) Relationships with others
2) Changes Incurred
3) Expansion of Mind

Once the individual enters relationships with people outside of the self, things begin to change. This change leads to expansion, just in time to reach the Midheaven.

4th Quadrant: Outer World Engagement and Interactive

For the last leg of the journey we have everything wrapping up in a mature way. This quadrant begins when the sun moves into Capricorn (♑) on the Winter solstice and lasts until Spring Equinox. In this way it coincides with regrowth, renewal, and, to a certain degree, death. This quadrant, composed of Capricorn, Aquarius (♒), and Pisces (♓) in the natural zodiac, is where a lot of freedom and growth happens. No longer is the individual content to experience the sensations associated with the outside world, but rather now the individual assumes a co-creative mentality. While these may be the last of the signs in the natural zodiac, these are also the signs that are all ruled by the outer planets, and as such they signify expansion and moving beyond.

First we have Capricorn, ruled by Saturn (♄). The 10th house is the house of occupations, and as such Saturn is the planet of lessons and manifestation. It is at the very top of the chart, and is also home to the Midheaven, which addresses occupations as well. Because of this, it is also a background light, which pervades all on a subtle level. Capricorns are practical and mature, and these traits allow them to manage better. Manage what, you ask? Time, resources, frugality, etc.

Next to its left is the sign Aquarius, ruled by, you guessed it, Saturn! The 11th house is the house of social circles and friends. Here again, in a house addressing something other than the self, we have a healthy dose of Saturnian energy. The traits of manifestation, limitations, and lesson learning are equally prevalent here, and the growth that comes with it. However, what separates the two is the fact that the Saturn of Capricorn is cold and desolate, while the Saturn of Aquarius is more thought oriented, as Aquarius is an air sign.

Finally, in the 12th house, we have the subconscious, endings, and undoings. This is ruled by Pisces, which is ruled by Jupiter (♃). Pisces is a water sign that is completely adaptable. However, that trait is also its greatest weakness. When something is as mutable as that, it is hard to nail it down to something, and therefore, in this way, Pisces is generally associated with wishy-washiness. The trade-off is that because it is so ungrounded, it is also highly psychic because there is nothing in the sign to tell it not to be, and nothing in the sign to keep it grounded and focused. This leaves the door open for impressions from Spirit. When this quadrant

is called *Outer Self-Awareness*, it's no joke! This outer self-awareness can also include non-physical awareness. It travels from an understanding of limits, lessons, and limitations to psychic development and impressionism. It goes from one extreme to another, and in this way promotes freedom through understanding through Saturn, and growth and independence through Jupiter. So in this quadrant we have Saturn, Saturn, and Jupiter. This puts Saturn at the apex of the chart, showing that lessons, limitations, and manifestations are the height of achievement.

This quadrant of the horoscope can be seen as outer self-awareness in the way that it brings the focus of the individual to the outside world and to the natural cycle of endings, as opposed to changes, as it was in the 8th house. The thinking part of this quadrant is shown in the fact that, to manifest, we must use our minds.

When there is a lot of activity in this area of the chart, it shows that an individual is coming from a space of freedom. It could also show, depending on the aspects, independence and free will.

So in the fourth quadrant we have:

1) Overall Life Focus
2) Group Interaction and Participation
3) The Ability to End things

Exercise #7: On your chart, add in house numbers and key words, if you choose. Adding in house keywords is not necessary, though.

Hemispheres

The chart can also be divided into hemispheres, which opens the door to another nuance of astrological interpretation. The activity in a particular hemisphere can reveal a lot about overall themes of the life of the native. There are two different sets of hemispheres to look at when you are interpreting a chart. They are polarized but complimentary and in this case are their own versions of Yin-Yang. There are the Northern and Southern Hemispheres, and Eastern and Western Hemispheres.

Let’s start off with the northern and southern hemispheres. When you look at your chart, the half of the chart that is at the top is known as the

Southern Hemisphere, and the half of the chart that is at the bottom is the Northern Hemisphere. Yes, I realize this seems counter-intuitive to most people, but the reason why this is laid out has to do with a principle of astrology. Because of the tilt on its axis, the Sun moves across the Southern part of the Sky, which means that it corresponds to the top of the chart due to the all-pervading influence on the whole chart. There is a lot more mathematical detail that can go into this explanation for those of you that are curious, but I am simply focusing on giving you a basic understanding for now. When the Sun is moving across the southern sky, it is at its strongest and thus would be towards the top of the chart. However, when the Sun is moving across the northern part of the sky, it is considered weaker and is thus located at the bottom of the chart, where its influence is a lot weaker. Houses one through six belong to the northern hemisphere, and houses seven through twelve belong to the southern hemisphere.

When the bulk of the chart activity is predominantly in one hemisphere, it reveals general overall vibes of life. For example, when the bulk of planetary activity is at the top of the chart, it is considered located in the southern hemisphere and tells us that the individual may spend a lot more time integrated with the outside world than someone that has the bulk of their planetary activity at the bottom of the chart, or in the northern hemisphere. Using this example I am picky with my words again, because I have seen great misunderstandings about this in astrology books. Just because someone is integrated to a high degree with the outside world does NOT mean they are an extrovert! It simply means a lot of their life has to do with the outside world in general.

In contrast, if there is a lot of activity in the bottom of the chart, also known as the northern hemisphere, it tells us the individual is not as integrated with the outside world as the other person in the example, but this doesn't mean they are necessarily any less active, nor are they an introvert! Simply put, they have a lot going on behind the scenes as it were, whether this is internally focused, or simply removed from the public eye. It has often times been said that someone with a busy northern hemisphere is someone that has a lot going on in their head, and interestingly enough, may have an easier time of it when it comes to quieting the mind and meditating. These are just generalizations though, so take them for what they're worth.

If there are northern and southern hemispheres, then by default there are eastern and eastern hemispheres, too. Learning these hemispheres round out our picture of the whole chart, and also helps to bridge understanding from hemispheres and quadrants to the angles that are found in a chart. Before we move along to angles though, let's finish looking at hemispheres. In the chart there are eastern and western hemispheres just like there are northern and southern ones.

When you look at a chart, the eastern hemisphere is the half of the chart that is to the left, and the western half of the chart is to the right. Thus the eastern hemisphere is comprised of houses one, two, three, and ten, eleven, and twelve. The western hemisphere is comprised of houses four, five, six, seven, eight, and nine. Each of these hemispheres is very different though, but can be easily delineated. If the bulk of the activity is occurring in the western hemisphere (so, houses four through nine), it is said that the individual is resolving and revisiting a lot of subjects and themes during this lifetime, so it is a cleanup kind of life. This doesn't mean that forward progress can't be made, but rather the individual is moving through society with the current of all the other people on the planet. In this way they can be seen as riding a big current of energy and making the most of it.

If someone has the bulk of chart activity in the eastern horizon though, they are approaching life from a much different perspective. This hemisphere is the hemisphere of the strong willed, independent, entrepreneurial individual that operates at their own pace and tempo, and go their own way. As you can infer, this also means that generally this type of person has a lot of life lessons and growth opportunities that others don't have, and they may also *not* be riding any wave or current of energy. However, it is also fair to say that perhaps the individual is more in line with *creating* their own wave of energy. Neither hemisphere is better than the other. Both have challenges and blessings that go with them, but this is good basic material to know. I have seen that people that know these subtleties tend to extract more information from a chart than people that don't, so I include it here to help expedite your astrological development.

The Angles of the Chart

The Ascendant, the Imum Coeli, the Descendant, and the Midheaven

In astrology, there are four particular chart points that exist in the chart to be aware of, as well as the planet/house/sign combinations that are related to them. These are overlooked in astrology quite a bit, but they can provide useful insight into general themes that may be present in individual lives. These four points correspond to the time of the day you were born. Each one has a different energy attached to it, and each one can provide insight into different dimensions of our lives. All four of these chart points are best understood by being reflective of psychological patterns of thought and how they manifest in our lives. There is more to it than just the psychological dimension though. When there is a transit to any of these points it may trigger life changes, specifically in the areas of those houses. We will discuss transits in Chapter 8 when we discuss aspects.

These four points have to do with the factors that were present at the time of the birth in the natal chart. The *Ascendant* is the sign that was on the eastern horizon at the time of your birth and begins at the 1st house cusp. Yes, this is as easy to understand as they come. If you were born when the Sun was in Libra, and if you were born at dawn, your ascendant would also be in Libra.

The *Descendant* is the sign that was on the western horizon at the time of your birth and begins on the 7th house cusp. Thus you already know what sign this is, too. This is the opposite sign of the one that is on the ascendant, so to use the above example, it would be Aries. The other two reflect whether the sun was up or down when you were born. The point at the bottom part of the chart represents the furthest point north in the sky/nativity.

The Ascendant

The Ascendant (sometimes abbreviated 'ASC') is the sign that acts as a mask. It is located on the cusp (or edge) of the 12th and 1st houses. It is the public face we all have. When people first meet us, they may mistake us for our Ascendant (also known as our *rising* sign), instead of who we are on the inside.

The Ascendant is also a sign that acts as a filter. It filters impulses we receive from the outside environment beyond ourselves. In this way it acts as a kind of tool through which we can work with our higher ego. Because

we live in a society that is more integrated than not, it could be argued that the ascendant is the most powerful point in the chart. Not only does it represent our public face and all things mentioned above, it also has to do with the role that we play in society in our chosen professional role.

It takes approximately two hours for the ascendant to change. This does not occur with regards to the natal chart, but it does apply to the daily chart. The way this applies to the natal chart ties into the idea of a progressed chart. I have found this detail valuable because knowing this makes it easier to guesstimate the ascendant of someone without having to hand cast a chart.

The Imum Coeli
(sometimes abbreviated 'IC')

The IC, also known as the Nadir (which translates to "bottom of the sky") or the Midnight point, reveals to us two core dimensions of our being. The first thing the IC reveals is through its role in our charts. The IC is located on the cusp of the 3rd and 4th houses. The amount of activity that is located there reveals to us an inner glimpse of our psyches. It is considered a weak house because it's the farthest north point and shows what is in some ways, us at our weakest.

The IC reveals to us how we handle such topics as security and taking care of our basic needs. This is foundational and covers the home, traditions, and behavior. This is also considered the hidden point, for you may find work goes unnoticed. This point also corresponds often times to the mother and motherly influence. Hence it can reveal information about the interaction with the mother figure early on in life. In this way it creates an axis with the 10th house, where the interaction with the father figure is revealed.

The Descendant

The Descendant is located on the cusp of the 6th and the 7th houses. It reveals to us how we like to unwind in our down time and what patterns we may have in our personal lives. It also gives us insight into our one on one relationships. The descendent also reveals to us what we like in personal

relationships. Do we like them active or laid back? What do we like the environment to be? This can apply in all areas of relationships.

The Midheaven

The Midheaven (also known as the Medium Coeli, or MC) is located on the cusp of the 9th and 10th houses. It reveals to us information and patterns of thought and action with regards to our professional life. However, as mentioned above, it also serves as the other point of the axis with the 4th, and represents the father figure.

The Midheaven also paints the backdrop against which our lives are played out. In other words, it is the general environment, psychologically speaking, we find ourselves in through our natural courses of action. Hence it is the *stage* that we find ourselves on.

There is a lot more that can be said about these four chart points, but I will leave that for another time. I believe you have enough information now to see them at work in your chart and also to understand how overall vibes can come into play in the life of an individual and how they are represented in a chart. Since we are not talking physical bodies in space, nor discussing how the sky is divided, we are talking about psychological facets of astrology when we study the angles in a chart. This is important to keep in mind because it is one of the rare instances of astrology that is more in line with the soft science side of things. While I emphasize they are more psychological in nature and manifestation, there is a lot more to them than that, which we will discuss in Chapter 8 when we talk about aspects. While, yes, they are overall diffused in a lot of ways, they are just as tangible and strong as planets when it comes to interpreting astrology, so they should not be dismissed lightly. Great care in their interpretation should be taken when one works with them.

Empty and Packed Houses

I am adding this brief section because I've had a lot of people ask me about this over the years. To me it belongs in a book like this because it is

an easy understanding for everyone and is something that, if known right off the bat, can be of great value for clarity and deeper understanding of a chart. Not every house has planetary activity in it. Yes, some charts are like that, but many more are not. The average number of empty houses in any given chart is three to five, so this is the common number to look for, in addition to what has been previously stated about hemispheres and quadrants.

If someone has three to five empty houses, then the chart could be considered average. However, if someone has far more empty houses, then by default they have a few houses that are packed with planetary activity. If you see an abnormal number of full or empty houses, then you can infer from this that the soul came into this life with a specific mission and a specific set of tools to accomplish said mission. An easy way to grasp this concept is to consider it this way. Before the soul came down into physical form, it decided if it would have a lot of tools at its disposal to accomplish its agenda, or if it is here to advance a specific agenda using specific tools. Of course the more focused the tool set, the more things the soul is not focused on, nor does it have the necessary tools. This doesn't necessarily mean it has to be to the detriment of the soul, rather it means there is a clarity here and the soul is in a lot of ways, single-minded. Again I pass no judgment here, as both are equally good and bad.

Exercise #8: Fill in the rest of your chart with the four angles, and make notes on where in your chart the planetary activity is occurring in whatever quadrants and hemispheres are applicable.

CHAPTER 8: ASPECTS

Let's start off by talking about the science behind aspects, and I assure you there is science there. Relationships between planets and certain chart points are based on Euclidean geometry. Basically, planets produce sounds which have been scientifically proven to alter DNA and moods. Aspects are a representation of Euclidean geometric principles, harmonizing or not, which affect the sound, which affect moods, which affect our very DNA! It's just straight science. Non-Euclidean geometry would give us different results for these aspects, but that is a conversation for another time and place. The short explanation is that we are affected by the geometric patterns produced through the waves of one planet interacting with others. When the music they make is harmonious, it is generally perceived as an easily beneficial aspect. But when the music they make is rough and doesn't harmonize in a pleasant way, it is generally perceived as a more opportunistic yet hard working aspect. The aforementioned gravity waves are great examples here. Let us now turn our attention to the aspects themselves, and how they are used in astrology.

Aspects are how planets talk to each other and how they influence each other. How planets aspect determines the ease of communication between them. In easy to understand terms, the softer the aspect, the easier they communicate. Aspects also denote past life successes and/or challenges. If you have a soft aspect in this life, chances are that in a past life (if you believe in them), you mastered that skill to the degree that it became second nature to you. Or, the soul that sent you into this body this life may believe that this frees your energy to go other directions. If you don't believe in past lives, aspects can be seen as the true, quintessential, language of the stars, covering our strengths and weaknesses through modern quantum physics principles.

In any event, soft aspects are those that add an easy dimension to the human existence. They are gifts to be used strategically and responsibly. They represent how the energy is being exchanged between different points in a chart. If we think in terms of communication and music, we gain a better understanding of how they come into manifestation in our lives. Music can be harmonious or discordant, and communication can either be easy or challenged, as examples. When we think along these lines, it makes it easier to spot them at work in our day to day lives.

Conversely, there is a truth to consider. That truth is that as easily as the soft aspect comes, there comes a challenge with it as well. The challenge is that those skills may be taken for granted. This can be a problem in this life as you may find that you fall into the category of "don't know what ya' got 'til it's gone." If you believe in reincarnation, abused skills may pave the way for issues. Humility will be brought to bear on those skills, and the karmic cycle continues.

Another point to consider is the fact that the softer the aspect, the subtler they manifest. For example, the best way to know whether or not a soft aspect is manifesting in your life is to look at the skills that come easy to you. Akin to talents, soft aspects are those that manifest, generally, without your knowledge. If you have a natural gift for managing other people's money (8th house) as a profession (10th house), there is most likely a soft major aspect there, and, to extrapolate it further, probably between two grounded planets and/or signs.

Types of Aspects

In astrology, there are a few categorizations of aspects that you should be familiar with. Aspects can be broken down into major and minor aspects, as well as hard and soft aspects. Let us take a closer look at these different categories to understand them more clearly. Major aspects are also known as the Ptolemy aspects because he was the thinker that emphasized them and brought them to the forefront. There are five of them, but even these can be subdivided, as we will discuss in a few moments. Here are the five major aspects, and when learning astrology, I encourage you to start with these five before learning and exploring others.

The Five Major Aspects

Sextile (□) (60 degrees): This is a gently flowing positive aspect between two chart points. The sextile is an angle produced when two points are approximately 60° from each other. This is known as a soft aspect because the aspect does not have any hard edges to it. The energy flows smoothly, almost unconsciously easily. Because of this, they may be hard to spot at work in the life of a native, but they often times also manifest as talents, too, so by learning one's talents, you learn their sextiles. Planets or chart points that are sextiling have only one attribute in common: they are both of the same gender. As is true in The Kybalion, is also true in astrology: there is a gender balance in the universe. With a sextile, the two planets share the same gender. For example, in the natural zodiac, when Taurus (**b**) sextiles Cancer (**d**), it is noted that both of these are negative signs. In astrology, negative signs translate to feminine signs. Also, by this same token, negative and feminine means receptive, as opposed to projective. This is key to understanding the energy of the sextile. The sextile is receptive to whatever is done with it. Ever had a skill that you knew you could do well, and not done anything with it because you knew you could do something with it later? Yep. That's a sextile.

Another perspective on the sextile is that, by working with one, you can assist in the manifestation of the other. For example, if you have Venus (**D**) sextile Mercury (**C**), you have no problem with the energies of Venus, or the energies of Mercury. The trick lies in harmonizing the two. This is true of all sextiles. Each one by itself is strength. But, the more the two are worked with and balanced, the stronger they become, and the better they interact together. In this scenario, when Venus and Mercury are balanced, they can produce harmony in communicating all things of beauty, whether this is an artistic endeavor or internal alchemy.

Something else to consider is that a sextile is best realized by understanding the self versus the not self. If the trick to working with the sextile is to balance it out for complete manifestation, then the best way to do that is through service to others, or through interacting with others. Using these methods is the easiest way to achieve this end. By working with others, and being aware of what is in the astrological chart, one can

utilize the time and energy spent with others in a more productive fashion, both for internal growth and for the betterment of others.

Square (□) (90 degrees): Now we come to my favorite aspect but one of the most misunderstood and ill-liked ones. This is the square. A square is formed when two planets are 90° apart. In older astrological texts, it was referred to as the most negative aspect, because it is not easily understood or worked with. Upon my own research, I discovered why this is. A square has four sharp edges. The other hard major aspects we've been dealing with have only one point to work with or from. A square is its own creature. As soon as you master one aspect of a square, another one comes back to bite you. There don't have to be four planets involved in this. There can only be two planets involved, but the four corners are there to be worked with nonetheless.

The elements in a square are not compatible, but the modes are the same. The similarity of modes is a key to harnessing the awesome power these can provide. Disharmonious elements can challenge the native to harmonize, but the common modality is essential to working with it. For example, if you have a square in two fixed modes, and one is in fire, with the other in water, you have to treat it differently than other elements. Fire and water are almost opposite ends of the spectrum. But by utilizing the modes of the square, you can bypass the unharmonious aspects of the planets. If you have a square that is mutable in nature, then you can harmonize the elements at your own tempo, for adaptability is the key to synthesis. If you have the common mode of fixed, then by establishing a routine, you can harness its power.

Why do I keep saying power? I'm glad you asked! It’s power because of what it can do. Similar to sanding the uncarved block from Taoism, or sanding the block of karma, working with a square can untap previously unknown potential on a large scale. Think of it as turning the square into a circle. By choosing to work with each aspect of the personal square, you are focusing on one point at a time, and by doing this, you are softening that aspect. Simply continue to do so until you have turned the square into a *circle*. You guessed it! A square is simply a circle that is waiting to be finished. It is the true microcosm to the macrocosm that is in nature inherent around us.

A lot of times people that have a lot of squares in their chart can feel persecuted without just cause. This is understandable because, to a certain degree, they are on a crucible. However, that pain is psychological. There is a wonderful opportunity to grow. The fact of the matter is that it just happens to take twice as much effort as any other aspect. This is a hint at the Esoteric Astrology teaching of the three different mode crosses.

Another point to consider is that the more the squares, the older the soul. Is there a direct correlation between the number of squares and the number of centuries? No. But the more squares in a chart, the more the soul is experienced in rough lifetimes, and the more lessons can be learned and fine-tuned during this lifetime. It truly is a compliment, and a sign that *god* won't give you any more than you can handle. What a compliment to your strength!

Trine (△) (120 degrees): A trine is created when two planets are 120° apart. This equates to 4 zodiacal signs, or 30 percent of the wheel. Just because the name of the aspect is a trine, this doesn't mean that there are three planets involved in this aspect. A trine is when, as stated above, two planets are 120° apart. In the natural zodiac, this equates to signs of the same element. In this fashion, it holds the old adage true: The strongest shape in the universe is the triangle. When two planets are in trine, they are helping to create a foundation that cannot be broken. Two planets that are trining are providing a stable base to build from. For example, if Mercury and Jupiter (**F**) are trining, they are speaking well together, and they provide a base to produce prosperity (Jupiter) through communication (Mercury). Once this base is mastered, one can then extrapolate to whatever degree is chosen.

The question then becomes: "*What if there is no third planet in the Trine?*" Honestly, in all practicality, this is a moot point. It's the fact that they connect on that firm level that matters. If there were a third planet involved in the trine, it would elevate the trine to a Grand Trine, which is an *aspect pattern*. The trine helps to stabilize energies already prevalent in the chart. In past life terms, the trine is an area of existence that has been mastered in previous lives, but still needs a little polishing in this lifetime before becoming almost automatic, like a sextile is. A trine does, however, provide the very stable base to grow from. In this way, a trine is actually

stronger than a sextile because it gives you something to grow from. A sextile simply is a fact, but a trine provides a base for growth.

Opposition (☍) (180 degrees): This is an aspect that denotes tension. Need I say more? The opposition occurs when two planets are 180° apart. This means that they are opposing each other. Depending on the node, they will either be opposing, or actively working against each other. In either case, they are at opposite ends of the spectrum, mathematically speaking.

The easiest way to understand an opposition is to think of it as a tug of war. There is planet 'A', which is at one end, and planet 'B' at another. A good rule of thumb to take into account is that each planet is six signs away from the other. For example, Mars in Capricorn (**j**) is six signs away from Mercury (**C**) in Cancer (**d**) (10-6=4). This is helpful when glancing at a chart for the first time. Besides being familiar with the standard planet, sign, and house combinations, one should also be familiar with the mode that the opposition is happening in. This is represented by the fact that the mode determines the intensity and style of opposition. The opposition is always going to be in the same mode, so this keeps things simple. In the above example, Capricorn is a Cardinal sign, as is Cancer. This means that any opposition in that mode is going to be forward oriented and progressive, but also active. An opposition in fixed signs would manifest much more rigidly and in a pattern fashion. An opposition in mutable signs would manifest in a much more fluid motion. Of course, with all these modes, the one thing to keep in mind is that the opposite energy of the energy of the opposition is crucial to working with it. For example, if you have an opposition in cardinal signs, don't try to make yourself very flexible. If you have an opposition in mutable signs, don't seek pattern to tap into it.

Oppositions are also easy to understand from a psychological perspective. To a certain extent, one can change their thinking to the opposite; thereby understanding what it is they are to learn. In this fashion they are applying wisdom to profit the wise by skipping the experience. For example, using the above example, Mars in Capricorn would be someone who is very career oriented, whereas the energy of Mercury in Cancer is someone who is very centered on not only the home life, but also as a sensitive communicator. This means that if the native feels more drawn to the career than the home, then so be it. But, if the native wants to

understand why they are very sensitive about their home and home life, one need not look further than their chart. By rearranging their thinking patterns and perspective on their paradigm, they can see things *in a different light*. In this case it would be someone going from extroverted to introverted, but not losing himself or herself in the process.

Conjunction (☌) (360 degrees/0 degrees): To begin with, a conjunct doesn't necessarily mean that they are in the *exact* same spot in the sky. As was discussed earlier in the course, there is the orb to consider. And, as mentioned before, the orb varies whether or not there are inner planets or outer planets involved, or a combination of both.

A few of the keywords associated with a conjunction are intensity and focus, but also blindness. The intensity and the focus come from the fact that there are two planetary bodies that fused together. For example, if you have Mars conjunct Mercury (**C**), all you want to do is communicate and transmute. This is an example of the intensity and the focus. But, here is an example of the blindness: Sometimes it is necessary to *not* communicate in order to observe how you are being received. This idea would be a challenge to someone with that particular conjunction. It's similar to the idea of "you can't see the forest for the trees". When looking at a chart, the idea of a conjunction being one of the most, if not the most, intense aspect of the chart could throw the interpretation of the chart off severely. When looking at charts, look for an anchor to that energy. Some of the most successful people have had a very powerful conjunction, but they have had something almost as profound to offset it.

A conjunction is a blessing in disguise. It is disguised not because it must be worked with to manifest, or that it is hidden, but rather that it comes so easily, it is easy to miss. It's not really a case of taking it for granted, but rather it just comes so naturally that you don't even realize it's there. Awareness of the energies combined is necessary to utilizing the full potential of what it has to offer. This means knowing the planets and what they represent and the combinations between planets and signs.

Now put into context of this setting the idea of adding modes. A cardinal conjunction is a lot different, and a lot different to work with than a fixed conjunction. A cardinal conjunction is one that would have lots of

energy, enthusiasm, and forward looking energy to it, while a fixed conjunction would be one that is much more rigid and pattern forming and manipulating. A mutable conjunction would be one that is teaching the self to be more adaptive. They would be the ones that have no problem being dropped in some place foreign because they know they will come out for the better and be able to help others along the way. It is not enough to spot a conjunction. It is equally as important to know the mode and see how the two intertwine.

Besides the node and the planetary energies, the element involved is, logically, just as important. If you have a conjunction in air, it is a different energy than if it was in earth. Think about the basic attributes of each element, and you will see the nature of the manifestation for the conjunction. There is a side note to this that should be considered: the speed of the manifestation of the conjunction with regards to the elemental association. For example, a conjunction in air will manifest quicker than a conjunction in earth. And the nature of the manifestation will be in accord with the element as well. Earth conjunctions will manifest more concrete than air conjunctions. But both are equally valid. And both can be used for prosperous and successful ends. To summarize briefly (very briefly), it depends on the YHVH formula for manifestation. For more information on that formula, consult high magick texts. *Modern Magick* by Donald Michael Kraig has the easiest to understand formula, but it can be found in many other classical texts on magick.

One final note that I must mention for clarity is that some books on astrology will say that a conjunction occurs when planets are either at the same space, or 360°. You be the judge. It's honestly the same thing.

As you can see, they all have degrees attached to them. In short, if two chart points are that many degrees apart, or close to it, then they have that kind of an exchange of energy between them. This is put into context of house and sign placement as well, so it does add another layer, but this is the glue that shows the life and structure of the chart, and then by extension, of the life of the native.

Major aspects are those that are the most prevalent in our day-to-day existences. For example, if you have a Trine (△) of fire in your chart, then it means that being active, motivated, and on the go come naturally to you.

This doesn't seem out of the ordinary until you study other people and see that they may not be as active or motivated as you. Often times this is seen as a negative, but when you look at it astrologically, it is just a different set of strengths. Major aspects are easy to understand because they are obvious. Major aspects are easy to spot in a chart because they are derivatives of 60°. This is important to note because a zodiacal circle is 360°, and 60° is one-sixth of a zodiacal circle. This translates to roughly twenty percent of the zodiac. This means that major aspects also roughly translate to three sign derivatives.

Minor aspects are more detail oriented, and thus they can be seen as filling in the gaps of a native's personality, as it were. They are still dynamic, but they have lesser strength to a large degree. They are fun to explore, especially from the sake of adding detail into your chart interpretations, but when starting astrology, it is wise to put all aspects other than the major ones off to the side until you are comfortable with them.

Minor Aspects

Minor aspects are those aspects that don't manifest as clearly or as potently as major aspects, but they have potential and influence regardless. Minor aspects are not as much based around the thirty-degree system as major aspects, but there is a rationale and psychology to them nonetheless.

By not being exact sign multiple distances apart, they are sometimes harder to spot at first glance, but their effects are not as pronounced as a trade off to their hidden nature. Minor aspects fall into more than just the two categories listed in this course. There are not only hard and soft minor aspects, but there is also what is known as *Ternary Aspects* as well. Soft and hard aspects are already familiar to you, but it is necessary to add something here. Whereas major aspects have a very forgiving orb of anywhere between 3-5 degrees, minor and ternary aspects have an orb of 1 or 2 degrees. They are much tighter in their interpretation. The reason for this is that they are much more acute in their manifestation, and therefore more exacting in their effect.

Ternary aspects come from the astrologer Johannes Kepler work from 1595-1624. They are lesser-known minor angles in astrology, and astrologers do not use them in common practice today. Think of them as the mortar that holds the foundation of the birth chart together. The other more widely known aspects come to us from one of the first fathers of astrology: Ptolemy, which is why they are used often and frequently. However, Kepler discovered many angles himself, and when put into context of sacred geometry, they fit in nicely with astrology's precision.

When you take into consideration all the different lesser-known angles in astrology, it is easy to see how the art is seen as intimidating. However, the thing to keep in mind is that whether or not one uses all of these tools in interpretation is at the choice of the interpreter. There is no hard fast rule as to whether they should be included in analysis. It is entirely choice. At first, they may be left by the wayside, but most astrologers have at least a passing familiarity with them. There are seven different aspects that we will cover in this class alone! The difference between them and the majors are that, since they are used less, there is less information available, so the sections will be shorter. This leaves it open as new territory to be navigated.

One final word on minor aspects. They are often times hard to spot, since they require math to be done to a certain degree. However, like asteroids, they are highly specialized, and when they manifest through the course of the life path, they manifest in an exact and exacting way. They are the details that assist a chart in *popping* to life, from a 2-D representation of divinity connection, to the 3-D mandala model, which has always been the intent. Minor aspects really bring out the variety of people and their experiences, which the old adage "variety is the spice of life" ring true. Let us start with soft minor aspects.

The semi-Sextile is the most commonly and popularly known soft minor angles out there. It is when two heavenly bodies are 30 degrees apart, with an orb of 1. The semi-Sextile is therefore half of a Sextile. To activate a semi-Sextile, it takes the individual a lot of work. First, one must be able to spot both planetary energies at work within them. Second, one must be able to see the outward manifestation of how these energetics dance and play out. Third, the conscious choice must be made to work with them, and

fourth, actually *working* with them must be done. A Sextile is a smooth relationship between the two that barely needs any activation, whereas the semi-Sextile does need more TLC.

Obviously a semi-Sextile will always be at least one sign apart, sometimes two signs apart (take into account the orb of one degree), and can be viewed like all other aspects as either applying or separating. When deciding whether or not to work with a semi-Sextile, one should consider whether or not it is separating or applying. It is easier to work with an applying semi-Sextile than a separating one. You can work with a separating one, but it is just more challenging. Semi-Sextiles are aspects that should be thought of more like the mortar holding the temple bricks together. It is the "how can I improve this detail of me?" aspect.

When semi-Sextiles are on the cusps of signs, they can be a little more troublesome to work with than if they are in full signs, but this only opens the door to creative application of alchemy.

The Virgintile is an aspect that Kepler added to astrology. It is when two heavenly bodies are 18 degrees apart. Therefore it is one-twentieth of the circle. This is a soft aspect because one twentieth is a round number, and as will be shown, there are some aspects that are not round in said fashion. In nature, the aspect manifests in a positive way. This is an aspect that produces mental ideas.

The Quindecile is an aspect from Kepler that addresses a distance of 24 degrees between heavenly bodies. This means that the bodies are 1/15th of the circle away from each other. Again, we have a round number, which is stable, as you will see. It is a weak aspect but positive in nature. The thing that makes the Quindecile unique is that although it is positive and soft, there is a certain touch of rebellion to it. It is known to have *radical* energy associated with it. It is also known to be an unfolding and creative aspect. It is also an aspect that can indicate obsession.

The Semi-Quintile, (AKA) Decile, is an aspect that is formed when two heavenly bodies are 36 degrees apart. This equates to a tenth of the circle. Micromanage as much as you like and see how detailed this aspect is. It is known for being fortunate and mild. This translates to a

natural affinity for an area of life that is mild but that you have fortune in. It is also similar to the Quintile but weaker.

A Quintile is an aspect that is formed when two bodies are 72 degrees apart. This equates to one fifth of the circle. By its definition and clarification, it signifies human endeavors and accomplishments. However, what makes this truly unique is the fact that the number 72 is very prominent in western tradition magick and paganism. In magick, among other things, it is associated with how many degrees there are between the points of a pentagram. There are also 72 Goetic Spirits in the Lesser Key of Solomon the King. There are also 72 names of God in the Judeo-Christian Mystic belief system. 72 is the number 24 x 3. This is key because the number *24* refers to spot 24 on the tree of life. This would place it between Tiphareth and Netzach, which then equates it with Death, Atu 13. I use all of this to illustrate interrelatedness and also to show how the smallest of aspects can be one of the most rewarding! In paganism, it is a number that is associated with Baphomet, or the horned god. This makes it lord of the woods and lord of the wild. It also makes it a very masculine energy.

A Sesqui-Quintile is a favorable, angular aspect that is one and a half times a quintile, which means that it is 108 degrees separating one heavenly body from another. Here we have a prime example of the lack of data available.

The Biquintile is an aspect that occurs when two heavenly bodies are 144 degrees apart. It is a harmonious aspect that is not covered much, since the inconjunct is 150 degrees. Because of the proximity of the two aspects, this gets lesser attention. It is subtle in its manifestation. Also of interesting note is the Judeo-Christian connotations implied with the number 144. This aspect speaks to creative energy of an uncommon amount and emphasis.

As can be seen from the aspects in this section, the number *72* and its derivatives play a significant role in astrological charts, if one but looks deep enough. There are fewer physical notes in this class, but the one thing to consider is how much of the finer astrological aspects hinges on derivatives of 72. However, there are more minor aspects in astrology to present. Let us turn our attention to them now as well, for the sake of completeness. These are known as hard minor aspects.

We begin with the Undecim. This is the smallest of the hard, minor aspects in astrology. It accounts for 32.72 degrees of a circle, or, roughly, 32.5 degrees. One of the reasons it is recognized is that it is 1/11th of a circle, so given the magical correspondences to the percentage it is taken into advisement. 11 is a prime number, and is usually associated with magick, among other things. This is a little knit picky because a semi-Sextile is 30 degrees of the circle. With an orb of one degree, this aspect brings to life the point made last class of one aspect overlapping another. The Undecim and the semi-Sextile are off by one degree, and it makes the difference between a soft minor aspect, and a hard minor aspect. The Undecim, and the Undecim family bring with them the idea of social consciousness and the skill to reach beyond the self for assistance. The other members of the Undecim family are the Biundecim at 65.45 degrees, the Truindecim at 98.18 degrees, the Quadriuncim at 131 degrees, and the Quinqueundecim at 164 degrees. When a 1-degree orb is taken into consideration, these are quite tight aspects, as well as very exacting. When taking the basic concept of the Undecim into consideration, it can be seen where the family goes from there. There's not much information on any of these minor hard angles at all, either in books or online, so I have very little to share here. Suffice to say that these are not necessarily easy to spot, but when they are, they can be worked with a little easier than major hard aspects. They are most exact in their traits, but because of that they are a little easier to mold and heal.

Now we proceed to the Novile, aka Nonagen. This is a degree that is 40 degrees apart. It is not quite the semi-square, but it is a little further out than the Undecim. This aspect reveals a spot in in the chart and life where it is wise for one to overcome restrictions. It also reveals in which life areas the native will undergo spiritual initiations.

Semi-Square. This is one of the most commonly known about minor aspects in astrology. It is 45 degrees in manifestation, thus making it half a square. Therefore, it is seen as a hard minor aspect because of its unforgiving lines. There are distinct differences, however, and these define its malleability. When working with a square, there are four hard angles to consider, and thus there are many different perspectives to take into account. By default this means that there is a lot of work put into it. With a

semi-square, there is not as much work put into it. You must still work at it, but there is only the one hard angle to contend with. There are still three major points to contend with, but it is still less than the hard four of a square. This puts it similar to working with a trine in some respects. The only difference is that you shouldn't expect it to balance out as well as a trine. These are life lessons, and they are meant to *challenge* us. A trine is meant to give us a solid working foundation. These are not. Traits of a semi-square include the same as a square, which are short patience, short sightedness, and drive. The difference is that a semi-square takes less work to manifest the lesson.

A septile is when objects are 53 degrees apart, or roughly 6.79 percent of a circle. This is an aspect that has to do with the idea of magick, the divinity found in creation, and is considered an aspect of the occult.

A binovile is an aspect where two bodies are 80 degrees away from each other. This equates to roughly 4.5 of a circle. When looked at in that light, it is an interesting angle. 80 degrees is 2 2/3 of a sign. This refers to bodies that are, for example, from Aries to the middle decanate of Gemini. Here is another case of splitting hairs, since 90 degrees is a square, which is a hard major aspect. Ten degrees separates a hard minor aspect from a hard major aspect. This detailed fact is what determines a hard minor from a hard major aspect. Major aspects are broader and cover a lot more ground, while minor aspects are more exacting, but if sloppy or loose, can be mistaken for major hard aspects. This confusion can lead to an unclear assessment of the psychological situation. Here again there has not been enough data collected for an accurate assessment. Just take into account how exactly a square and a Sextile manifests and in between the two you get this. Easy but rough.

A Biseptile is formed when two bodies are 103 degrees from each other. This aspect is how one manifests their destiny.

A squine is when two objects are 105 degrees away from each other. This would mean that they are forming an aspect that is a cross between a square at 90 degrees and a trine at 120 degrees. To understand this aspect, think of it as a cross between a square and a trine.

A sesquiquadrate occurs when two objects are 135 degrees apart. This is another commonly known hard minor aspect that one will see referred to by many astrologers. Sometimes it is also known as a sesquisquare, square and a half, quartile and a half, or a trioctile. This is known as an aspect that reveals present tension, and also tells us the solution is control.

The Quincunx, also known as the Inconjunct, occurs when planets are 150 degrees away from each other. This is one of the more documented minor aspects of astrology, and the bodies involved in a quincunx don't understand each other. Most Quincunxes share nothing in common with each other. However, this is part of their challenge. Redirecting, challenging and diverting can all be said true of the Quincunx. With an orb of 2 degrees, the Quincunx crosses the path of another aspect: the Triseptile.

The Triseptile is an aspect that is there when two heavenly bodies are 154 degrees apart. Therefore there are those times that a Triseptile is the same as a Quincunx, aspect speaking. As far as a translation goes for that, the same or similar energetic could be said true. Keep in mind that in situations like this one, the art is in the interpretation. However, this aspect also reveals a trigger point for irrational responses and/or conditions.

The Quatronovile is the last of the minor aspects to look at. This occurs when planets are 160 degrees away from each other. This means that they are 2 1/4 of a circle away from each other. This aspect reveals a life path, or perhaps a calling, for the individual which can be seen as dynamic.

As you start to take a closer look at minor aspects, you may find that things get intricately detailed, and that there are several different terms that mean the same thing, such as semi-quintile also being known as a Decile. And, eventually, you will find this takes you into another area of astrology that has to do with the harmonics in a chart, but I’m not addressing that here. Rather, I’m simply letting you know it exists.

When looking at the minor aspects, you can see that a lot go together, or are derivatives of one another, and there is a deeper side of astrology there. When you read that list, if your intuition was saying something like that, let me validate that you are correct. If the names are similar or derived from others, there is a common connection there. This is

worth pointing out here because the next few minor aspects I will briefly list reveal this truth very clearly.

Other minor aspects that exist but that are beyond the scope of this book include the semi-Sesquisquare, which is 22.5 degrees and has an *event* style of energy to it, the quadnovile, which is 160 degrees and means concepts like perfection and marriage, and the quarto square family of aspects that include 3x, 5x, and 7x facets.

The final thing to note is that when it comes to glyphs for the individual minor aspects, I seem to have left them off. Bluntly, this is for two reasons. The first is that I found conflicting glyphs for the same aspect, and the second is that there were many aspects that didn't have any more than a letter and a number, or multiple numbers, attached to them. These two points greatly diminish the respectability of astrology in my eyes, as it shows a lack of cohesion and professionalism, but I do want you to know *why* those are not present.

Orbs

Astrology is not a black and white science, but rather it is a science that understands the idea of mutually exclusive is not a physical law. For personal planets, an orb of 3-5 degrees is suggested and encouraged, depending on the speed of the planet on the day. For Saturn and trans-Saturnian bodies, a wider orb is suggested of 5-7 degrees on average, again based on planetary speed of any given day. For points such as asteroids and nodes, and minor aspects consider an orb of approximately 1-2 degrees.

So what exactly *are* orbs? Think of orbs as orbs of influence, in that orbs are basically saying planets and chart points may manifest as a particular aspect or aspect pattern if they are close enough to each other. In other words, aspects don't have to be exact in order to manifest. They can be close enough to the specific degree of an aspect to manifest the traits of that aspect. The orb varies though, on a couple of different factors. The first one is the one we just discussed, which is that the orbs are based on the size of the planets as well as their proximity to us. And, of course, the size of the bodies is factored in as well.

There is another factor though, which is that they vary based on how they appear in a natal chart. This requires a slight tangent into psychology though, so bear with me a moment while we put things together. One of the things you want to do when you're first learning astrology is to see how the average aspect plays out in any given chart. Are you looking at a chart full of tight aspects or loose ones? What about your chart? Is your chart full of loose aspects or tight ones? There is no right or wrong answer here, but this is worth thinking about to prevent a subconscious pitfall to manifest.

Astrology says to start with your own chart when you're beginning, and that is wisdom I fully endorse. However, a common subconscious thought pattern we oftentimes fall into is that if we have tight orbs of influence in our chart, then we may automatically look for that specifically in other charts we interpret, and that is the trap! Just because we have charts of tight orbs doesn't mean other charts will as well, so if we go looking for those and don't find them, then we are doing a disservice to the native. Instead, we should look at the overall chart and draw our deductions and inferences from it, rather than go into it, subconsciously or not, looking to meet specific criteria. This used to happen to me, so I have learned from this, and I hope you heed the warning. If you're in doubt, then ask the native questions about their life in order to see if they should be tight or loose orbs. Interpret from there.

One final detail point to note is that aspects, but in this case orbs also, can be broken down further for deeper understanding. Aspects can also be seen as *separating* or *applying*. I realize this may seem like an odd idea, so let me explain. When you work with aspects enough, you notice that sometimes the aspect is approaching exactness, but sometimes it is leaving exactness between the two chart points. If the orb of influence reveals that the aspect has not hit exactness yet, then it is known as an applying aspect. However, if it has already left exactness, it is known as separating. To me, the understanding of what that means is in the title, but allow me to explain further for clarification.

If an aspect is applying, it means the aspect has not become exact yet, and thus at some point after the first breath of the individual, the aspect will become exact, and when this happens, it will trigger some sort of life event for the native. This also means the energy of the aspect is building,

and thus a more of an anxious kind of manifestation will accompany the aspect in the daily life of the native.

However, if it is separating, it means the aspect was exact before birth, but is waning from influence and strength. What this means in a day-to-day sense is that the individual will still have the characteristics of the aspect in their life, but that a more reserved type of energy may manifest. Thus in other words, the individual may not be anxious when it comes to the nature of the aspect, they may instead be resigned to simply dealing with it and may even go so far as to have next to no, or no, emotional attachment to the situation. For those of you that are familiar with the waxing and waning cycles of the moon, this same idea is at play here.

Aspect Patterns

When aspects are looked at by themselves, they can be seen as ways that heavenly bodies communicate between themselves. But when patterns of aspects are studied, they can be seen as communication patterns between the heavenly bodies. This understanding can point to a larger picture than regular aspects could. For example, when looking at aspects we are looking at the trees, and when looking at aspect patterns we are looking at the forest.

Aspect patterns can tell us where or how energy is placed in the chart, and by default, what areas are the best to tap into individually. For example, if there is a *T-Square* in the chart, then it should be understood that things would manifest a lot differently than if there is a *Grand Trine*. We will look at both of these in-depth in a little while. Suffice to say for now that the direction and focus of energy into an individual's life is guided by the over-laying patterns of a chart as well as the individual patterns known as aspects.

Common Aspect Patterns

Let’s start with *The Bundle*. The bundle is also known as a *wedge* and is a very common pattern that is easy to spot at first sight. It is technically defined as a group of planets and/or heavenly bodies that are no more than 120 degrees apart, as well as being grouped within four houses distance. Of

course, like any other aspect or aspect pattern, there is approximately an orb of 1 or 2 degrees to consider, and an exact aspect pattern is rare.

Four factors to consider when looking at a bundle are the leading planet, sign it is in, the house that most of the activity is taking place in, and the trailing planet. Let's dissect: 1) the lead planet of the bundle tells how the individual will manifest, initially, the thought to begin the action of manifestation. For example, if the lead planet is Mars, then the initial impulse will come through actively and quickly, as well as maybe even being seen as aggressive by the individual. Whereas if the moon was the leading planet, then the initial impulse could be seen as more of an intuitive flash and an intuitive leading, rather than an aggressive pursuit of an idea. 2) The sign the lead planet is in will determine what form of thought will occur. For example, if the lead sign is Leo, then ego first will be a mainstay of the idea. Also included in that will be creativity brought about to express the self. 3) The house that has the bulk of the activity will be the focus of the individual and where their attention and energy will go.

A point to watch for is the stellium. A stellium occurs when there are five planets in a sign. As you can see from the definition, a lot of bundles are stelliums as well. This is not necessarily always true, as the support of the bundle may be different than a traditional bundle, but the two are close to misleading, so pay attention to the lead and the trailing planets involved. Sometimes a stellium can be too much energy focused in one place, while a bundle is not, so pay attention to the details!

The Grand Trine is the next pattern to look at. The Grand Trine occurs when there are three planets in the same element forming a trine that is anchored in all three places. Sometimes it can be offset by an element, especially when orbs are taken into account, but this generally has no bearing on the manifestation of the pattern. Grand Trines are exceptionally easy for the individual to work with, but that is also the weakness. A native can be so acclimated to his or her Grand Trine that they may not be able to conceive of anyone having a difficult time with the element their grand trine is in. The challenge is to be open to other points of view and always question the ease at which you work. People with Grand Trines in their charts sometimes like to take the easy road and even avoid confrontations! Imagine someone with a fire grand trine avoiding confrontations!

The only other point to consider about a grand trine is whether there are inner or outer planets involved in it. If two of the three are inner planets, then it manifests in a more hard-edged way, as opposed to the soft edged way it would manifest if two of the planets were outer ones. This would explain why two people with Grand Trines in the same element would have it manifest differently in their lives.

Next is the *T-Square*. A T-Square is related to a *Grand Cross*, so we will cover both here. A Grand Cross occurs when there is a planet at each of four points of a chart. This is also sometimes called a *Grand Square*. It is also sometimes called a *Seesaw*. However, a Seesaw is actually a perfect square. To some with this aspect pattern, it may seem as if they are on a cross with the amount of energy coming in from all directions. The key is to use extreme self-discipline to focus the energy so that it doesn't overwhelm the self. A T-Square is that same pattern but with one anchoring point missing, so the intensity of energy coming in is not as much as a Grand Cross. However, the amount of focus and self-discipline required is just as much in either case to harness the amount of energy. The difference between the two is that the T-Square is more unbalanced and harder to deal with than the Grand Cross. A Grand Cross is anchored at four points, while a T-Square lacks the final balancer.

A *Grand Sextile* is formed from six interlocking sextiles and three oppositions, forming a magnified sextile that runs throughout the chart. By harnessing the power of the six sextiles, one can go through life in a balanced fashion, if only the doubt that comes from the two oppositions is overcome.

Related to a Grand Sextile is a *Kite* pattern. This is formed when a planet is in opposition to one of the planets in a Grand Trine, *and* in sextile to each of the others. This pattern resembles a kite! When you see this pattern in a chart look for the interplay between planets, signs, and houses for manifestation clues. The kite pattern has a reputation for being very good to work with, since it is composed of sextiles and trines. Besides having a reputation for helping people to *land on their feet* as life tosses them around, it is also key to note that people with this pattern are practical and look at life challenges from a grounded perspective. They are also enterprising and see everything through to a successful ending. The

opposition from the other end of the kite provides the energy to get going on projects and is the drive for the successful endeavors.

A *Mystical Rectangle* is formed when there are two pairs of oppositions that are sextile and trine to each other, forming a rectangle in the chart. Once again we have the oppositions that give energy to the rest of the sextiles and trines. There is a relaxed flow of energy and an ease of opportunity when this pattern is manifested openly and well.

Next is *The Locomotive*. This aspect pattern is fairly easy to spot at first glance. It is a pattern where planets are distributed evenly through eight of the twelve signs. A key element is that there is a trine (four signs) of empty houses. Key notes to watch for when trying to identify this pattern in charts are: four empty signs between the outside two planets in the pattern, eight occupied signs of the chart, and the largest gaps in the pattern are no more than 60 degrees. Obviously, when it comes to an all-encompassing pattern like this, there are many other aspect patterns contained in it that we have already discussed, so when practicing spotting these in charts, don't feel restricted to choosing one pattern over another. The art is in the synthesis!

The key psychology of the Locomotive is in the underlying thought patterns of the individual. When using the word *locomotive*, the first thing that comes to mind is "I think I can". That is not necessarily the case with this pattern, but it is not far off. More accurately it would be "I *know* I can". People with this pattern have the belief in themselves, their skills, and their abilities, no matter what other aspects may be masked within the locomotive design.

One of the easiest aspect patterns to spot is *The Bowl*. Yes, it is as easy to spot as it sounds. A bowl is formed when all of the planets in a chart are in one half of the chart, and the outer two are in opposition to each other. The one that crosses the ascendant line is the one that is most of the focus and energy in this lifetime. Sounds simple, doesn't it?

Well think again! Extrapolate this out for a glimpse of how complex it can get, by rethinking the empty sectors. For example, if everything is below the horizon line, you have an *introvert*, if all is above the horizon, then you have the opposite, and so on and so forth around the wheel. By

seeing what is not present as clearly as what is present, you can get an idea for how the person operates on an internal level, as well as an external level. One buzzword for this line of thinking in how the individual *contains* his or her self.

Following the bowl pattern is a related one called *The Bucket*. The bucket is the same as the bowl, with one exception: with the bucket there is a handle opposite the bowl of the pattern. When this type of pattern is noticed, special attention should be given to the handle, what it represents, its placement, and how it works to *guide* the bowl. To understand and work with this pattern, think in terms of an actual bucket and water: water being a metaphor for energy. If the handle is straight up, then the bucket is full and balanced. If the handle is tilted off to one side, then the bucket is tilted slightly, and there is a chance of energy pouring out, etc., etc., etc.

The opposite thinking of the bucket pattern is the pattern called *The Fan*. In the fan, the emphasis and study is on the bundle, not the handle. The other defining factor is that the fan has two fewer houses filled with planets. For a bowl pattern, and then by default the bucket pattern, you have six houses with planets in them. With a fan, you only have the four central ones, with a planet in opposition to the central point (or offset as above) as a handle.

Students of astrology can see how this is a little easier to work with since the focus of study is on the four houses that have planets in them alone and then the handle as an anchor and guide. The outer limits of the bundle part of the fan are no more than 120 degrees. The more the handle leaves the central opposite point of the opposite of the fan, the more it loses its impact and focus.

The *Yod* is the next aspect to be discussed, and it is arguably the most documented and most pronounced. Sometimes it is known as the *Finger of God* or the *Finger of Fate*. It is formed when there is a planet at the tip of the finger that is two quincunxes away, one clockwise and one counterclockwise from the tip planet. And, those two planets are sextile from each other. One thing to note is that the chart points involved in a Yod don't necessarily have to be planets. They can be placements such as the ascendant, MC, Descendant, and IC. When these things happen, the

manifestation of the Yod is much different than when there are three planets involved.

To put it into perspective, Willie Nelson has two Yods in his chart. This is one very distinct fashion that it can manifest. However, a Yod in a chart doesn't necessarily equate with fame and success. This is a misconception of a Yod. One theory is that if a Yod doesn't manifest by the age of 40, then it most likely won't manifest at all. It is more of an opportunity to grow beyond the norm. To put it plainly, the Yod represents an underlying theme in one's life.

This opens the door to the more esoteric definition of the Yod. According to Western Esoteric Tradition, the Yod is in the four-fold name of god, and of manifestation. For example, in the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram, it is in the East, and is spelled in English "YHVH". In this way it is the Hebrew letter that starts everything off. When the Yod is seen in a chart, keep in mind there is only an orb of about 1 to 1 1/2 degrees. Anything past that erodes the quality and manifestation of the Yod in the life of the native. Volumes have been written about the Yod, so feel free to pursue.

The *Splay* is a pattern that stands on its own in many regards. One of the key points of a splay is that there will be at least one grouping of three planets in a particular house and/or sign. Resembling a tripod, this can be representative of someone who has varied interests, but is stable and focused in at least one. Technically, a splay is a concentration of planets in one house, then three empty houses, then another concentration of three planets in a house, but then *one empty house, and a concentration of planets in a house*. This makes it sort of like a tripod, so it is stable, but it doesn't distribute the energy equally, so there is more focus in one house than in another. Usually a splay pattern is not the first pattern noticed in the chart. It is usually a latter one considered when all others are ruled out. Its strengths are that it is diverse and solid.

Finally, the last aspect pattern we come to is the most interesting. It is simply called the *Splash*. This is also easily spotted. It is seen when there is a planet in almost every house, evenly distributed. This, of course, leaves one empty house. When this pattern is noticed, it is indicative of even and ultimate diversity. Similar to the thought form of a *jack of all trades*, this

individual can play many roles and has many skills. The strength is the ability to handle anything, but the weakness is no mastery of any. The challenge here is to focus and develop one above the rest. However, doing so takes away from the depth of the adaptability of the rest. The superficial adaptability is still there, but the depth is lost.

Parallels and Contraparallels

This is something I alluded to in Chapter 3, and wanted to circle back to here to give you a taste of just how far you can take modern astrological thought. There is a fairly recent concept being worked with by more and more astrologers, especially those that resonate with the blending of astrology and astronomy, which is the concept of parallels and contraparallels.

These two ideas come to us from what is called the *declination*. Declinations arrive into astrology from astronomy, where they got their start. The basic premise behind these terms can be summarized as follows. The declination in astronomy is how high above the horizon line a planet is located. Of course scientifically this also means it addresses how far *below* the horizon line some planets are located. I'm not going to get further into this here because there are those out there who are better well-versed in this, so I leave it to them to write the tomes. However, a tangent of this is a parallel. Basically, a parallel is when two planets would be seen as being parallel in the sky to one another, whether in positive declination (I.e. in the visible sky above us), or negative declination (I.e., out of our range of sight.) If planets are seen as being parallel to each other, then they are also seen to have a harmonious exchange between them.

Conversely, it is also true that some planets are not parallel to each other in the sky, and these are known as *contraparallels*. These are planets that are not only NOT parallel to each other, they are also perpendicular to each other. As one would imagine, this means their energies do not get along smoothly or nicely. The dominant way these two concepts are used right now are psychological in focus, but to give you an example of how potent they are, it is often said that mental illness can be determined if we take a close look at parallels and contraparallels. The general rule of thumb is that the more contraparallels, the more the psyche of the individual may be challenged or outside the social normal parameters. And the more

parallels present, the better a mental disposition someone has. It should be remembered though, that this material should be put into context of aspects and other pieces of the chart described in this book, but it is vital information to note and explore when one is ready.

Exercise #9: Find all of the aspects you can in your chart. Begin by focusing on the major aspects, and move your way into minor aspects if you want. Then, when this is complete, turn your attention to the aspect patterns present in your chart. Record them as well. This also includes separating and applying aspects. If you are feeling courageous, you can research parallels and contraparallels, too.

CHAPTER 9: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Through the course of this book there have been exercises contained in Chapters 2, 6, 7, and 8. While elementary and rudimentary, they walk you through from beginning to *almost* end, laying out everything you need to say that you have put together your own astrological chart by hand. However, the method in this book is much, much different than you will see in older astrological books. In previous centuries, putting a chart together by hand meant doing all the math to construct a chart from a table of houses, ephemeris, and other specialized astrological books. I took a different approach in this book because we are not in those centuries anymore, and more and more people are simply going to pages on the Internet to enter their birth information and get their chart that way.

There's nothing wrong with learning the math behind astrology, and I strongly encourage you to do so! I put it off for far too long when I was learning astrology, but when I did learn it, I was blown away at the nuances and subtleties that were contained in the math that was used. However, I'm the first to say that I am not very good at math, so it was a severe challenge for me. If you are good at math, then spare no expense and learn how to calculate a chart by hand. But, if you're like me, and not very good at math, then this book serves as a good beginning point to learn astrology. Lacking skills in math, or a good teacher for that matter, should not prevent you from learning astrology, especially in the information age.

Traditionally an astrologer would first learn how to draw a chart by hand, and then would dive into everything we discussed here, and that is still a fantastic method to learn astrology. In this day and age though, more and more people are getting introduced to astrology through various digital resources, so they come to astrology already knowing many things about themselves that traditional astrologers would not have known when they

started. Hence it's a different environment, and thus requires a different approach. It is my sincere intent to encourage you to learn how to draw a chart by hand, but by offering this book, I cater to the people that may have a challenge with that for various reasons. This also means that you can learn the math behind it and still find this book useful as a reference.

Because of this, this chapter will be brief. I am going to focus on recapping the exercises and showing you where you should be if I did my job as a teacher and author and if you did the work. As we all know, studying a subject only takes you so far. Then you either do the work and become someone with a working knowledge of it, or you don't, preferring to remain on the sidelines as a fan, hobbyist, and theoretician. I'm not passing judgment here, but rather emphasizing that when it comes to astrology and all things related to metaphysics and the occult, there are generally three groups of people: Those that *do* the work, those that *read* about it but never engage in its practice, and those that are a mix of reading and doing, or in other words, a mix of theory and practice.

Exercises one through four are easy enough to accomplish. Whether you draw a circle and subdivide it by hand or with a tool is irrelevant, because we are emphasizing simply getting it done.

With exercise five through seven we start to add a little more detail to the chart, fleshing it out with houses, planets, signs, and angles. Exercises eight and nine focus on putting the finishing touches on it by defining and explaining aspects and aspect patterns. We also address the angles and hemisphere relevance. Thus by the end of all nine exercises, we have a fully fleshed out chart. Or, do we?

I mean, we do have a fully fleshed out chart, but not *really* a fleshed out chart because we only have the map, and as the old saying goes, the map is not the territory. This is the reason for this chapter. While you may have your chart laid out in front of you, you have only mastered half of the equation. Now it is time to turn our attention to the beginning of chart interpretation. In this chapter I will go into some detail to show you how to analyze the information you've gotten.

Chart Interpretation 101

The first question to address is why I call it an interpretation rather than a reading, as many other astrologers do. I do this because it is my firm belief that astrology is its own language, and thus one needs an interpreter to be able to understand it. I arrived at this conclusion over the last ten years or so because I notice patterns. After all, I am an astrologer, and recognizing patterns is something quality astrologers should be doing almost unconsciously. It should be so ingrained in the psyche of the practicing professional astrologer that they should not but help to see patterns everywhere and in everyone. All of life is patterns, even if these patterns follow the chaos theory in manifestation.

Over the course of many years, I have interacted with astrologers of all types and have experience with many different kinds of organizations where astrology played a major role. Due to this, I noticed that many astrologers are like big children with a new toy. When they begin talking about astrology, many unconsciously fall into the lingo of astrology, and oftentimes fail to read the person they are speaking with. They miss the social cues that tell them the other person is lost when it comes to what they are saying. As a matter of fact, I've created or adopted a term to address this. I call this *speaking astrologese*, treating it as another language. Unlike others, I don't see this as any indicator of the social graces of astrologers, but rather I see someone that is so excited about their passion that they oftentimes get caught up in the moment. It's like a child playing with a new toy on Christmas, and it is made all the better if they have someone to share that moment with! But, this is also the reason *why* I treat astrology the way I do. While joyous and energetic, these kinds of conversations can also turn individuals off to astrology if the astrologer becomes so self-absorbed and misses the social cues due to enthusiasm. I have known many people that got turned off of astrology for this very reason, and this book is meant to address those people, as well as to give words of warning to astrologers that may fall into this subconsciously. In any event, this is why I call it a chart interpretation rather than a reading. Others may not follow suit, and that is perfectly fine with me, for their path is not mine, and vice versa.

While you have all of the individual pieces necessary for interpretation from the previous chapters, there is still the matter of putting them all together, which is what we will discuss here. Right now it may look like a lot of disconnected information, or a puzzle that you have all of

the pieces for, but may not have an image to consult to know what the final picture is like. As I stated before, you basically have all of the trees in the forest, but now it's time to focus on the forest itself. The technique I like to use to assimilate this data is by focusing on the large swaths found in the chart, and then fine tuning things to look at the smaller pieces and the details. This is the approach we will take here.

Now that you have your hand drawn chart in front of you, look for three specific things. These are often times called *The Big Three*, as they are the chart points that people generally focus on when beginning to learn astrology, and are handy to have memorized because they are the ones that play a large role in knowing ourselves overall. In your chart, identify where your Sun is, your Moon, and last, your Ascendant. For the Sun and Moon, you should be able to identify the signs they are in, as well as the houses. When it comes to the ascendant, knowing the sign of it is good enough for now.

When you have them identified, you can move on to the next step of interpretation, which is to create context for them. The main focus here is putting together the three pieces of the Sun and Moon. What sign is your Sun? Your Moon? Remember that signs are patterns of energy, and thus they tell us how you may live out those two luminaries. What elements are they? When you've accomplished this, check to see in which houses they are found. Remember that houses are life areas we all experience, and when we identify what life areas these two bodies are found in, we see what life areas we are most active in. For example, if the Sun is located in the fourth house, it tells us you shine your best and brightest around the home and all things related to the domestic scene and your roots. If your Sun is located in the tenth house, it tells us you may shine your best and brightest when it comes to your occupation and career, but also, since the Midheaven is located there, it tells us your overall vibe of life is to shine your best and brightest, even if it's not predominantly in your occupation. Follow this same line of thought through for your Moon, too, but remember the dual nature of the Moon in astrology. What house your Moon is located in tells us where your emotions are most activated, but also where may be the main focus of your day to day almost subconscious life. Take a moment to accomplish all of this before continuing. Also remember to pay attention to the modalities of the signs as well. Record all of this information in the

notebook you've been using. Then look at how this plays out in your daily life. This is the key to making astrology work: seeing how it plays out in physical life. And understandably, this is the hardest part of astrology for many to grasp. What it takes to accomplish this is repetition and practice, so if it doesn't make sense early on, continue to work with it every chance you get.

After you have this information recorded, turn your attention to the ascendant. Remember that this is the sign on the first house cusp, and it is a lens and filter. Record this information in your journal as well. When you have done this, you now have your *Big Three*. When it comes to reading your horoscopes, or at least starting to learn practical and living astrology, these are the three to consult. Sometimes a person gets more pertinent information about how to handle day to day affairs by consulting their Moon sign rather than the Sun. Or, sometimes, more information is gained by paying attention to the ascendant. One of the biggest reasons for this is that things kind of depend on what we're doing on any given day. For example, if you plan on spending a lot of your day doing day to day tasks, then the Moon would be wise to consult. However, if you plan on spending a lot of your time integrated with society, then reading about what is occurring with your ascendant would be wise. Remember to also focus on how your ascendant plays out in day to day life.

Now that you have your big three, we turn our attention to a few other broad points to understand the chart. The next point to look at is to note the Midheaven. Remember that it is located on the tenth house cusp, and represents the overall vibe of life. For example, if you have Leo at the Midheaven, it means you may be sunny, optimistic, and creative overall when it comes to how you live your life. It also means you may be more in the public eye as it were, to a large degree. You may also have child-like qualities as well, or at least spend a decent amount of time around children. Note your Midheaven, record it in your journal, and write down any impressions you may have as to how it plays out on average.

Unlike other tomes on astrology, and unlike other astrologers, we are going to turn our attention to a couple of other points that usually get skipped over and neglected. We will now focus on the descendant and the IC. Remember that the descendant is the opposite of the ascendant, and thus

it lies on the seventh house cusp. This gives insight not only into how you have personal relationships with others, but also how you may enjoy unwinding at night when you're done with the day. For example, someone with a Gemini descendant may enjoy their down time filled with various tasks, or perhaps they enjoy chatty conversations with others to fill their time. Record your descendant in your journal and make notes on what this tells you about yourself.

Return to your chart and find your IC. Remember it is the opposite of your Midheaven. This is considered the weakest part of your chart, so planets and things that are located there are considered weaker overall. There are a few exceptions to this of course, but for now it is simply wise to remember what this means. Record this information in your journal before continuing. Since we've touched on all four chart points and the luminaries, let us address one other thing. Look to see if any of these points are on the cusp of a sign. If any or all of these points are near the beginning or the end of particular signs, they are said to be on the cusp, which means they are just as much influenced by the adjacent sign as they are the sign they are found. If any of these points, and even any points in the rest of the chart, are located on the cusp, remember to record the information for *both* signs as they influence the whole of the chart and the whole of your life in general. When you have double checked for cusps, make sure your journal is current before continuing.

Before moving onto aspects of particular planets, let's look for aspect patterns. A general rule of thumb is that aspect patterns are similar to the Midheaven in that they generally address overall vibes and influences on the life of the native. For example, someone with a Grand Trine in fire is someone that has a lot of energy at their disposal. They may be constantly on the go, or perhaps they are more aggressive than most, but in any event, they are not ones that sit idly by and watch life happen. They are the ones that make things happen, for better or for worse. Consult Chapter 8 for a list of aspect patterns, and see which ones are at play in your chart. Remember to watch for orbs of influence, too. Record all of this in your journal.

Finally, let us turn our attention to the true meat of the chart: the individual aspects. We have now assessed the forest, so let us look at the individual trees. For each planet in your chart, figure out what aspects are occurring. At this point it would be wise to focus on only the five major

aspects, and only aspects between planets. Below is a quick reference formula to follow when interpreting aspects at the beginning of your astrological journey.

"My planet_____ is located in the sign of _____ in the ____ house. This means that in that life area, _____ is how things generally manifest." As you can see, this is very general, broad, and formulated, but this serves as a starting point to interpret and understand the hows and whys of astrology in a living sense. When you train yourself to think along these lines it makes it easier to see the planets and aspects in play in your daily life. This is intended to simply give you something to work with in the beginning, and it is wise to adjust this as you choose and see fit to understand your chart. I won't go into more depth here, as I want to move on to other things, but if you use this as a starting point, you will soon discover that seeing a chart in action can be easy if you do your due diligence.

While you're researching this, also pay attention to one detail, which is that some of your planets may not have strong aspects at all, and they may seem to stand alone in the chart. This requires a brief discussion and clarification, so let us take a side detour to fill in some blanks. Let us begin with a little bit of cynicism. As you can see from all of the aspects, major and minor that were addressed in Chapter 8, almost *every* planet in your chart has some sort of aspect attached to it, whether major or minor. Hence to a certain degree, *there is no such thing as unaspected planets*. There, I said it. However, there is a HUGE caveat that comes with this, and that is that sometimes planets are considered unaspected if there are no major aspects present. In this case, minor aspects are generally disregarded. I leave it to you to decide how to treat unaspected planets, but I will give you some insight into how to interpret unaspected planets if you go that route.

The general rule of thumb in functional astrology is that unaspected planets may tend to be a handful to deal with. This is because they are not integrated with planets in the rest of the chart, so when working with them you have no leverage to use to create success. It is uncommon to find unaspected planets in a chart, but it does occur, and with this basic information, you are now in a position to deal with them competently. Needless to say, if you only use major aspects, good beginner material may be more common than if you include minor ones, so this should also be kept

in mind. Anyway, back on point. At this point, record all of the planets in your chart and the affiliated aspects. While I suggest focusing on only the major aspects at this point, feel free to include minor aspects as well, if you choose. Take your time while doing this part of your astrological education, and remember to pay special attention to how these are at work in your day-to-day life.

The final point in interpretation, if you choose to pursue it, would be to look at parallels and contraparallels. But let's be honest, really, that is an advanced topic, so if you choose to put it off, it is completely understandable. Also remember they predominantly give insight into the mental health and well-being that may or may not be present in your chart. If you choose to put this off until you have more experience, then that is just as acceptable. After all, everything from here on out will proceed at your pace and tempo.

Now we come to the close of this brief tome on astrology. From here what you do with it is entirely up to you. All of the preliminary necessities to learn and understand astrology are found here. This book can serve as a foundational text for where you grow from here. Astrology is the most powerful tool you didn't know you had, and remember that knowing when to act is as important as knowing how to act.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bishop Bill Duvendack is a lifelong practitioner and student of the western mysteries, as well as being an internationally known astrologer, presenter, psychic, tarot reader, teacher, clairvoyant, and author, whose clients can be found all over the globe.

He is an ordained Thelemic priest and bishop who can provide ceremonies of any faith and type, in accord with one's beliefs. He has performed everything from weddings and handfastings to baby naming and blessing ceremonies as well as remembrance services. He is ordained through the EGNU (Ecclesia Gnostica Universalis) He was formally an ordained Spiritualist minister with over a decade of experience on the church board. When it comes to astrology, he is a lifetime member and past president of the Astrological Association of St Louis, where he spent over a decade on the board there, too. He has formally ran a coven and is the founder of Temple 418. His monthly Sun sign horoscopes are also available on his website, and daily horoscopes appear on his Facebook page. He has presented in many different venues, ranging from public libraries, high schools, and colleges, to private groups and gatherings, including a long list of occult events. He has made many media appearances on Fox television, NBC, and the CW; interviews with local papers, and has been interviewed by the NY Times and RTE 1 radio from Dublin, Ireland, in addition to local radio station KMOX in St Louis MO.

When it comes to the Western Esoteric Mystery Tradition, he has been working with that system for 33 years, and has much experience with its teachings. In this regard, he is an internationally published author, with essays appearing in over a dozen anthologies covering a variety of topics, and in various magazines and newsletters. He has written over a dozen books on the Western Esoteric Tradition on various subjects. He is co-creator of the Oraculum Leviathan tarot deck, along with Asenath Mason. His magical writings have been translated into six different languages. His

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He is also available for private consultations of most varieties. For more information, feel free to contact him at bill@418ascendant.com, or visit his website: **www.418ascendant.com**

BOOKS

From L to R: *Vocal Magick*, published by Immanion Press, *Spirit Relations*, same publisher, *The Metaphysics of Magick*, available through Createspace, *Lucifer Chronicles*, published through Become a Living God, as well as *Awakening Lucifer*, co-written with Asenath Mason.

Front Two Books: (L) *In the Shadow of the Watchtower*, *Enochian Grimoire* V 1, published through Sirius Limited Esoterica. (2) *Sat En Anpu*, through the same publisher.